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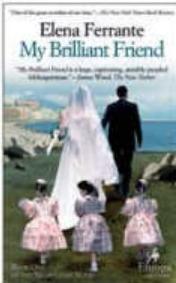
BRT08/15/E



Merry Christmas!



This month I'm loving...



My Brilliant Friend by Elena Ferrante I love the mystery around this book almost as much as I loved the book itself: the Banksy of the Italian literary world, 'Elena Ferrante' has been writing for over 10 years. But that is not her real name, and nobody knows her true identity, although there is plenty of speculation. This series of four novels (The Neopolitan series) is about the lifelong friendship of two women born into the same poor neighbourhood in Naples – with all the love, enmity and complications that that entails. It's a stealth book ... very understated, but it creeps up on you and suddenly you find yourself caring about the characters, and looking for the next in the series.



Arabic hummus! And Jewish, excellent praiseworthy falafel with free refill on every hummus, whether you're Arabs, Jews, Christians or Indians. Special bargain: 50% discount on hummus to a table where Arabs and Jews sit together.'

The Hummus Bar at the M Mall in Israel, because it's offering 50% off the bill to Jews and Arabs who sit at the same table and eat together. A translation of the offer reads: 'Scared of Arabs? Scared of Jews? With us there are no Arabs, but also no Jews. With us there are people! And genuine excellent

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Jerry's Burger Bar (Observatory and Park Road, Cape Town)

There's very little that can beat a good burger every now and then, and Jerry's burgers are right up there with the best of them: great meat, delicious toppings ... and crispy, fabulous chips. All good!



The first time I heard the word 'misspeak' was in 2008 when Hilary Clinton was trying to explain why she'd said she had to evade sniper fire in Bosnia in 1996 – when, in fact, she hadn't been anywhere near any sniper fire. 'I misspoke,' she said when she was caught out. Until then, I never knew misspeaking was an option. I thought we were all pretty much limited to telling a whopper or telling the truth.

Obviously, since then we've all become very familiar with the notion of misspending (sometimes also referred to in South Africa as 'to nkandla'), but a while ago I came across the concept of 'mis-selling', when Lewis Stores was referred to the National Consumer Tribunal for selling insurance to customers who couldn't possibly claim on it, never mind afford it.

While I love the idea that 'mis' is such a powerful prefix that it can turn lying and stealing into seemingly completely unintentional mistakes, at this time of year I firmly believe that there is only one viable use for 'mis', and that's in the word 'mistletoe'.



The Krone Chardonnay Pinot Noir is lovely anyway, but its very clever Helix Twist top is a total win: it's a cork you can twist and turn to open the bottle, as you would a champagne cork – with the crucial difference that this one you can put back in! Basically a cork that works like a screw top. Win-win.

Happy holidays!

SUZY

SUZY BROKENSHA
EDITOR
sbrokensha@fairlady.com

have your say

winning letter



'From strength to strength'

Your article on hormone therapy (October 2015) was informative and impartial. After consulting with my gynae in 2014, we agreed I'd begin oral HT. I was 49, and experiencing classic menopausal symptoms. My gynae considered me a prime candidate for HT, but the deciding factor was the risk of developing osteoporosis. As a lifetime athlete and Iron-Man finisher, the prospect of a future without sport filled me with dread.

After 14 months on HT the nightmare symptoms have disappeared, I've summited Kilimanjaro and trekked to Everest Base Camp. I urge anyone to have that initial discussion with their gynae. HT is not for everyone, but it might be the best thing for you!

Cheryl Gibson-Dicks, Jeffreys Bay

Ed: We agree; every woman's situation is different, and we need to talk to a professional who is totally up to date and informed about HT – and who knows us and understands our own situation – to be able to make a properly informed choice. Good for you!

'Woman power'

Carol Tshabalala (featured in 'The First Lady of Sport'; September 2015) is a phenomenal woman! She is strong in her convictions, principled, fiercely driven, passionate and unapologetically and unwaveringly herself! Our country is filled with amazing and phenomenal women like her. Women should make it their mission to befriend other women who are dedicated to pursuing their own empowerment and emancipation. They should build a network of women of substance, thought leaders, across all sectors. They must start building one another up and not pull each other down. How many women are waiting for another woman's downfall to make a breakthrough?

Isaac Tshepo, Johannesburg

Ed: We agree with you about Carol! But those other competitive women you refer to are clearly not FAIRLADY readers – we're all about supporting each other!



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'The power of load-shedding'

Sometime in the '80s my love affair with power cuts started. We were newly wed and my husband was a registrar at a hospital. He was always studying. Dark evenings were a golden opportunity to spend quiet time together. 'So what do you do in the dark' (September 2015) affirmed my idea that power cuts mean more family time, offer new ways to complete tasks and give life to ideas that would not otherwise see the light. I don't dismiss the negative impact of the crisis, but I love the way it leaves us knowing more about our ability to live life. **Elsi Meyer, Pretoria**

Ed: I think what I love most about South Africans is our willingness to look on the bright side – even in the dark!

Thanks for reminding me, Elsi.



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Buying someone a fragrance as a gift can be a daunting task. Our tip? Find out what their favourite scent is and look for something in the same category – i.e. floral, fruity, oriental, woody... Or look for something with similar notes. (This is where Google is your friend!) Still not sure? Ask for advice at the fragrance counter.

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Conquering

*f*or the past four years, a group of South African celebrities has set out to climb the tallest mountain in Africa as part of the Trek4Mandela campaign – a campaign that, together with the Nelson Mandela Foundation, aims to raise money to provide sanitary towels for girls so that they no longer have to miss school.

Leanne Manas and Gerry Elsdon were part of this year's group. We listened in as they chatted to each other about the good, the bad and the ugly bits of their experience.

Gerry: Leanne, how did you feel just after you'd agreed to climb Kilimanjaro?

Leanne: Of all the decisions related to the climb, deciding I was going to do it was the hardest one. My husband, Marc, who climbed with me, kept telling Sello Hatang, CEO of The Nelson Mandela Foundation, that he was trying to convince me and that I was 99% there. But it wasn't until the day of the media release that I decided

● The journey was the most difficult thing I had ever done in my life but also the most rewarding. ●

I was just going to go for it.

But Gerry, you came on board a little bit later. How did you feel, making that decision after the fact?

Gerry: I was MC-ing an event for the Department of Tourism, who'd invited Sello to make a few comments. He spoke about Trek4Mandela and I just knew I was going to do it. So when he handed the mic back to me, I said I'd climb Kilimanjaro with them. I thought, 'Did I really just do that? Maybe no one heard, so they wouldn't hold me to it.' When I got home, I told my husband I'd committed to it. 'Honey, what am I going to do?' I asked.

'Of course you're going to do it,' he said. 'Being a humanitarian is important to you; you get to work with young women and you get to climb.' And he basically told me I'd be a wuss if I didn't do it.

Leanne: So, in a nutshell, both our husbands were responsible [laughs]. As powerful and as stubborn as we both are, it took a push from them!

Gerry: Were you ready for the training?

Leanne: I was quite excited about it. But I'd never done that kind of training before. Especially considering we had to take on the Westcliff Steps – 210 up and 210 down. It was hectic.

When we finally got the hang of the stairs, they announced that we'd be doing it with an 8kg bag to practise for when it came to the real deal – carrying our backpacks. It was tough, very tough.

Kilimanjaro... *and so much more*

In a life-changing journey, Leanne Manas and Gerry Elsdon, along with 35 other local celebrities, reached the highest point in Africa – and it was all for a good cause.

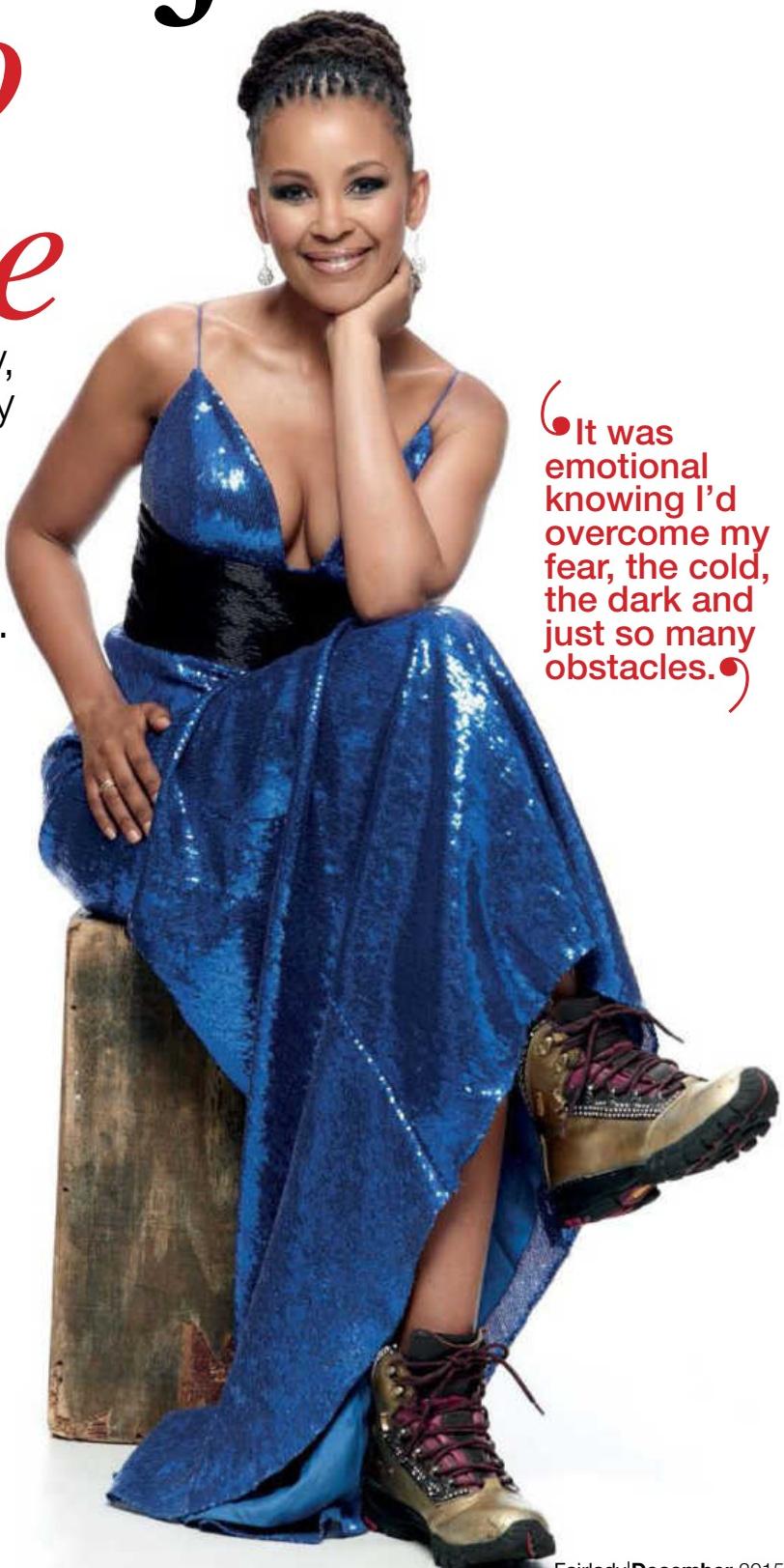
But, Gerry, you're reasonably fit, I would say. What was training like for you?

Gerry: The hardest part for me was slowing down. I'm a runner, so even with the bag on my back, I'd run the hills. That was painful. Eventually I had to load the bag more heavily – so I wouldn't feel the need to run. I had to slow myself down because one thing about Kilimanjaro is that you cannot do it fast.

Leanne: Yes, taking it slow is definitely the secret. So the training was done and we were ready for the climb – let's talk about the night before we set off. One of the best things for me was that I had my husband by my side.

What were you feeling?

Gerry: Some people would say I went a little crazy. I don't think we



It was emotional knowing I'd overcome my fear, the cold, the dark and just so many obstacles.



expected the welcome we received when we arrived in Tanzania. We had the South African government supporting us; the High Commissioner came out to meet us at the airport – there was a big fuss. But I just wanted to climb the mountain. On the long ride up on the bus, I was freaking out, saying, ‘Where is the mountain? I can’t see the mountain!’ People were fast asleep and there I was, having a hissy fit. But that was nothing...

The next morning, I woke up missing my husband and the air that I breathed back home. I almost lost it. I tried to call him – but I couldn’t get a signal. I felt that if I didn’t speak to him one last time, I wouldn’t make it through the climb. One of the male climbers, a very quiet man named Joseph, handed me his phone. My husband answered immediately: ‘I thought you were going to go up that mountain without saying goodbye.’

‘And I thought I wasn’t going to get hold of you before I did,’ I said. It was one of the most emotional moments of my life. Before I hung

up, he said, “Go kick some Kili ass!” And that was it. I was ready.

But Leanne, as you said, you had someone by your side. What was it like climbing as a couple? Who moaned the most?

Leanne: Mark is more of a moaner. I’m more relaxed. But we didn’t argue until the night before we summited, when I think our emotions were running high. We got into a tiff over something so small – one of us was supposed to fill up the water but didn’t. So we decided we didn’t want to speak to each other. But when we woke up, everything was fine again. For me, that highlighted that nothing is normal while you’re climbing Kilimanjaro. Nothing.

The first time we were separated was on summit night because they put the women in front and the men at the back. And at the first stop, I was feeling awful. My head started spinning, I was dizzy. I could hear Mark asking, ‘Where is Leanne? Have you seen Leanne?’ And then we

were back together. He and our guide helped me so much. If it weren’t for the two of them, I don’t think I would’ve summited. It just meant so much to have him by my side.

Gerry: On the mountain, my time was very different. It was my time to be alone. I don’t do spas or nail parlours; my running is when I become introspective and whole. I always wore my earphones because it was time for me – it was the time when I was most prayerful. It was always going to be a Gerry journey. But I enjoyed the chats and laughs with the others – especially making sure all the girls were okay. We even had a communal pee pot going.

Leanne: A pee pot? What do you mean? [laughs]

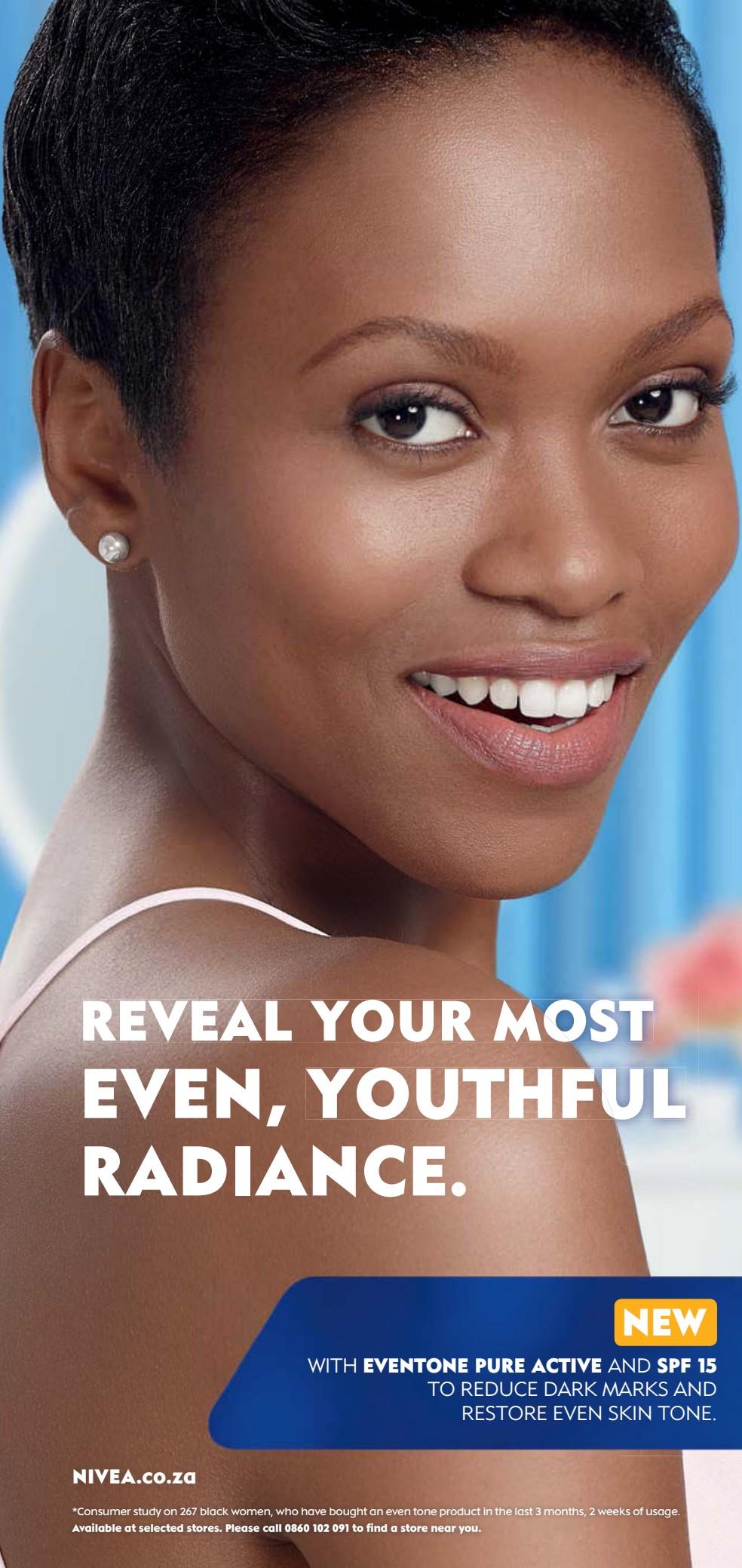
Gerry: We went deep-rural. After the first night when we had to leave the cabin in the dark to use the bathroom, I got the girls together and asked them if it would be okay for us to share a pee pot. We didn’t tell anyone because we didn’t want the others to make a big deal about it. But it worked for us. By the way, it wasn’t an ‘anything’ pot, it was only a pee pot.

But, Leanne, speaking about peeing – which we did a lot of, thanks to our acclimatisation medication – I bought seven pee sticks, thanks to you. How did you know we’d need pee sticks?

Leanne: If you know anything about camping, you know it’s a stick that allows a woman to stand and pee. But I never used it once.

Gerry: I wet myself so many times because of that thing. In fact, I’m busy redesigning the pee stick because I plan to summit again next year and I just cannot use it in its current form.

Leanne: Squatting behind a rock was the least of my worries.



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TREK4MANDALA
EXPEDITION TO
KILIMANJARO WAS
A DEEPLY MOVING
EXPERIENCE



One of the most awesome moments for me was getting to base camp. The scenery, the friendships, the conversation, having popcorn and tea, singing Motown hits and playing 30 Seconds – it was a ball.

But as I arrived at one of the base camps, I saw a stretcher being rushed down. And when we got closer, I realised that there was a body inside a sleeping bag. They never told us who the person was and if they were dead or alive, but we did hear from our guides that it was a man who died trying to summit.

That's when everything hit home. It became a personal, and really difficult, journey – anything could go wrong up there. Did you see the body?

Gerry: Fortunately not. One of the most important things our guides told us was to be honest when they asked us how we were doing physically. That honesty would save our lives and help us summit. It would get us home safely to our families. And I made a concerted effort to do self-examinations.

Because I'm an epilepsy sufferer, it was ultra-important for me to ask myself, 'Are my eyes blurry? Do I have a metallic taste in my mouth?' I needed to make sure I'd be ready for summit night.

Leanne: That's true. Summit night is a beast all on its own. How did it feel to finally reach the Roof of Africa?

Gerry: I researched Kilimanjaro like crazy – I read a lot. But somehow I missed the part that said there were three summits – not just one. So when we got to the first summit point, I thought that was it. But before I sat down, someone said, 'Guys, we're not there yet.'

Leanne: Your heart must've sunk.

Gerry: Just a little [*laughs*]. I said, 'What do you mean?' to which they responded, 'We need to keep going.'

I decided not to sit but to continue standing on my shaky legs because I needed to keep going. There are people who stopped at Gilman's, the first summit point, and never got up again. But I was going to finish.

When I eventually reached Uhuru, the highest point, and saw everyone standing there, I cried and cried. It was emotional knowing I'd overcome my fear, the cold, the dark – just so

many obstacles. I had never been closer to God.

I recorded a video up there, saying, 'To every girl who thought they could not, we walked up this mountain to let you know that you can. There is nothing in your life that you cannot overcome.' And I truly believe that.

Leanne: Mine was quite different. I was dizzy, nauseous and had a headache. I started lagging behind and Marc stayed with me. They also assigned a guide to walk with me – he was a guardian angel and even gave me his water because mine had frozen.

So when I reached the ultimate peak, there was no feeling like it. I realised that the journey was the most difficult thing I had ever done in my life – but also the most rewarding thing.

There were 37 people climbing, all different characters. Some of us knew one another; some had never met. And even for those who knew one another, it was a completely new experience. The camaraderie was amazing. The lesson I learnt, standing there, is that I managed to achieve my impossible. I didn't know I had that many layers. ♣

For more information on Trek4Mandela visit www.trek4mandela.com.

T R E N E R Y

Summer 2015



Lee-Ann's family CHRISTMAS

Our gorgeous cover girl talks about why family comes first and how she's thriving in her 30s, and shares some of her favourite festive times with us.

Sure, Lee-Ann Liebenberg's successful 10-year run on the international modelling scene brought her fame and glamour. But the flipside of that life was that it took her away from the people and the country she loves. 'I travelled all over the world for two weeks at a time,' she says. Her decision to trade the international scene for fewer, smaller jobs locally wasn't made lightly, but she hasn't looked back. In fact, she's flourishing now – not only as a model, but also as a mother to Gia, five, and Gabriella, one.

'When I had Gia I didn't want to take on work that would take me away from my family. I enjoyed a successful career before she was born, but nothing fulfils me as much as being a mom. I am still very passionate

about what I do, so when the right job comes along – one that doesn't compromise my family – I do definitely take it on!'

Born in Roodepoort to an Afrikaans mum and English dad, Lee-Ann describes a loving upbringing, along with her three siblings Adrienne, Allen and Ryan. 'My mom jokes that she had Ryan seven years after me because I was too naughty for her to have another child! My husband Nicky was also raised Afrikaans; we share similar backgrounds, are very much alike and have the same core values that we learnt from our parents and will pass on to our children.'

Investing more time in her family life was a practical decision, but becoming a mom is more than just



DECORATING THE CHRISTMAS TREE IS A FAMILY AFFAIR

a lifestyle change, she says. 'It totally consumes you. I live and breathe for my babies and it is by far the best thing that has ever happened to me. I no longer live for myself, without purpose; I am now responsible for the happiness and wellbeing of two beautiful souls. They bring me endless joy, and watching them grow fascinates me. The best part about being a mom is feeling in love 24/7.'

It's no wonder then Lee-Ann's favourite time of the year is the

I live and breathe for my babies, and it is by far the best thing that has ever happened to me.



LEE-ANN CAN THINK OF NO BETTER WAY TO SPEND CHRISTMAS THAN WITH HER FAMILY – INCLUDING HUSBAND NICKY VAN DER WALT, AND DAUGHTERS GIA AND GABRIELLA – AT THE COAST IN CAPE TOWN

festive season, when she gets to savour special moments with her husband and the girls, her parents and her in-laws. ‘Growing up, we made the annual 14-hour “trek” to Cape Town’s northern suburbs to spend the holidays with my grandparents. My late grandmother, Marina, taught me to love Christmas as much as I do because she created the most magical, festive atmosphere in her home. I miss her dearly, especially over Christmas. I try to replicate my special childhood Christmas memories for my children. I literally forced Nicky to dress up as Santa to surprise Gia when she was three – she believed that he was the real deal. It was absolutely magical to watch her interact with him. She was completely mesmerised.’

And don’t forget the Christmas tree decorations! ‘I go a little overboard at Christmas time because it’s my favourite holiday. Every year we decorate the tree a little earlier to make Christmas last longer. When I was younger and still modelling internationally, I flew home from wherever I was in the world to spend Christmas with my family. I brought my mom special decorations from every country I visited. Let’s just say she has a very colourful and interesting Christmas tree! But for me, it’s really the most important time for us to be together as a family.’

So what are Lee-Ann’s favourite traditions? A glorious Christmas braai! ‘I’m definitely a coastal Christmas person – we usually spend our festive holidays in Cape Town. We celebrate Christmas eve at my in-laws, then we have a Christmas Day braai with my parents, in-laws and our friends at our place. I love being surrounded by all the people I love and care about. The idea of a big family has always resonated with me because I want a house filled with people and noise – good noise! Apart from looking forward to the sun, sea and sand, I cannot wait to spend time



LEE-ANN WITH GIA ON HER WEDDING DAY IN 2011

with my parents. They work very hard during the year and it’s always so nice to see them feeling relaxed and carefree.’

Though she’s travelled the world, Lee-Ann’s heart is here. ‘We live in the most beautiful country. I fall more deeply in love with Cape Town every time I visit. After my husband, daughters and I were victims of a very scary armed robbery on Gabriella’s first birthday in April this year, I felt sad that our country is being damaged by a few bad apples. But the kindness and care that strangers showed me afterwards restored my faith in my fellow South Africans; we’re a very special breed indeed. I love how passionate we are. Also, I love biltong! I craved it when I was pregnant and think it’s a great protein snack if you’re watching your weight. I do hope for better leadership in South Africa, though.’

Now in her 30s, Lee-Ann has a new-found inner calm. ‘I do wish I had travelled more in my early 20s, but I was too scared to take major risks. I wasted a lot of time when I

was younger not believing in myself. If I could go back to my 16-year-old self, I’d tell myself this: if someone believes in you, believe them. They see something in you that you are not yet aware of, and potential that you do not even know you possess.

‘At 33, I find I am way more relaxed about other people’s opinions of (and misconceptions about) me. I must be honest: being criticised hurts. I’m only human. It has taken me years to not allow the negativity to affect me. But it usually comes from people who don’t know me. “Lee-Ann Liebenberg” is not who I am. I am really quite the opposite at home and around my friends, and it is easy for me to separate the two. Being Lee-Ann Liebenberg is my job; I leave that persona in the studio. You’d probably walk right past me in the mall. I don’t like the attention when I’m with my family, and I get very shy when someone recognises me. I now know who the real me is, and after many years I have confidence in my worth. I also feel a lot more in control of the direction of my life.’

Having to prove herself anew every day and maintain her confidence under huge public scrutiny has been her biggest challenge. ‘Confidence is so important – without it we come across as bland,’ says Lee-Ann. ‘For me, beauty stems from personality.’

Lee-Ann has carefully shaped her family and home life to be authentic and loving. You could say she’s ‘settling down’, but she’s still totally on top of her game: 2015 saw her named SA’s Sexiest Woman for the sixth time at the YOU Spectacular awards. ‘It was definitely a surprise highlight for me this year – especially at my age and after two children! Who’d have thought? Also, ending 2015 on the FAIRLADY cover and with the prospect of teaming up with one of my role models on a reality TV show is more than I could ever have dreamt of. ♦

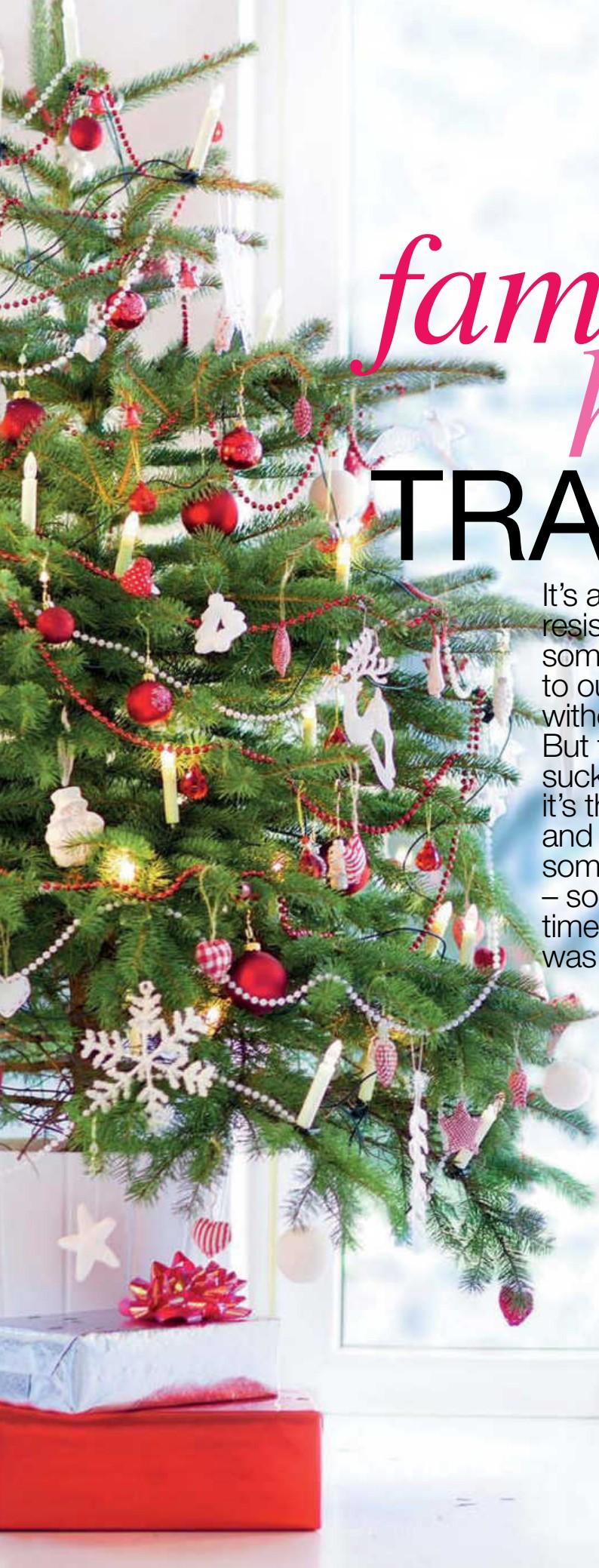


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family *holiday* TRADITIONS

It's a strange thing, ritual. Some of us resist it mightily to avoid monotony; some of us cling to it to bring sanity to our days. Most of us have rituals without even realising they're there. But there's one type of ritual we're all suckers for – the family tradition! Since it's the season to indulge our warm and fuzzy feelings, we rounded up some weird and wonderful traditions – some Christmassy, some fit for any time of the year. What we didn't expect was to learn a few new lessons.

THE FAMILY AGM



I'll start with my own family favourite – the tradition that sparked my interest in what other families do. About three years ago, my dad suggested that we hold a Family Meeting, an AGM of sorts. I suspect it was originally a way to get us up to speed with family finances and plan the year ahead, but it quickly became much more than that. With one sister based in Germany, one in Cape Town, one in Stellenbosch and our parents in Pretoria, the opportunities to sit and talk had become fewer and fewer and more difficult to coordinate. The Family AGM was a way of bringing us together to share the important



When I look back on an AGM, it feels nostalgic and heartwarming, and I'm excited about the next one.

stuff in a constructive way. Because we're dotted across the country (and, more recently, round the world), it usually happens around Christmas and New Year, when we all have a bit of holiday.

We lock down a time, pour some champagne or wine, sit around a table and the AGM commences. There's an agenda and we take minutes. We rotate the task of taking minutes, which has become a creative project with photos and visuals that we file away. Every time I look back on an AGM, it feels nostalgic and heartwarming, and I feel excited about the next one. The agenda goes like this...

Accolades: Each member of the family has a turn in the spotlight when we tell them why we're proud of them. Accolades include (but aren't limited to) professional achievements, emotional triumphs and whatever else made us feel proud. It's so great to hear this – but also, because it's part

of the meeting, you get the chance to say that you're proud of that person without feeling gushy and silly.

Goals and objectives: In much the same way as with accolades, we take turns to share our goals for the coming year. It's great to look back at minutes and remember our previous resolutions.

Holidays: We all get so busy during the year, so planning family holidays together is a priority. Here we look at potential dates, destinations and adventures we want to share.

Finances: My dad fills us in on all the exciting projects and plans he's been working on. It's one of the things I most look forward to as it's great to know exactly what is going on so we're all on the same page.

Hartsake: This translates as 'matters of the heart'. Last but not least on the list, this is the platform for us to share any pressing issues.

Though the AGM is structured and detailed, at its core it's a fun, relaxed way of fostering togetherness, communication and continuity. I've been making mental notes throughout the year of things to mention.

THE CHRISTMAS RIDDLE

Aaron, a doctor from Berlin, Germany, shares his tradition, which has made its way to some South African friends.

'Since I was 11 (in 1999), The Christmas Riddle or Mystery has been a much anticipated event for my family. When I was little, I wanted to become a geography teacher, so throughout the year I collected interesting questions. Some were questions I was asked, some were found in encyclopaedias and on the internet. Sometimes I opened the *World Atlas* randomly and found something exciting. At home with my family at Christmas, an exam consisting of my collected questions has to be written before gifts are handed out. I mark the answers and make corrections and notes with a red pen and we discuss the answers. It's lots of fun, and everyone is eager to get the best score – even if the prize is just the title of 'winner'. Some of my friends and their families have adopted The Christmas Riddle now. And I get to be a teacher with a red pen once a year!'



THE ANNUAL
BLACK-TIE GATHERING ON
THE SCHABORTS' FARM

THE KAROO EXPERIENCE

Nives Schabot and family, from Cape Town, tell the story of their annual do in the Karoo.

'Once a year, over the June/July holidays, we invite friends and their families to our farm in the Karoo. We tell them to bring along proper black-tie attire – suits, heels, ties, the works. The first time we told our guests to do this they thought we were joking, but we were dead serious.'

So on one night of the holidays, everyone has to dress up and we have a formal dinner: The Karoo Experience. There is proper French champagne, great food and everyone has a turn to speak. The first year, we weren't sure exactly how it was

THE TABLES ARE DECORATED BY THE
GUESTS WITH BEAUTIFUL FOUND
OBJECTS FROM THE KAROO LANDSCAPE

going to work and everyone had to get involved. But it worked!

We thought we would have a lot of push-back with people saying, "No, I'm not comfortable," so we had a place-mat with words on it and we said, "Okay, just pick a word and make a speech using that." We wanted to provide the opportunity for all the kids to stand up and hone these important skills in front of a sympathetic audience. Where else can they get a chance to stand up and speak in front of their peers and successful older people who have only their best interests at heart? As the night progressed, those who'd initially had reservations about speaking were asking for second and third turns! We've had the most amazing, inspirational ideas and thoughts come out of it. There's no theme; it can be anything – a speech, a poem or even a joke – as long as everyone takes their turn. Each year one of the children takes a turn at being MC. We have a list of prepared items that they need to fit in and they shuffle them to fit between the courses as they think best.

We usually have a lamb on the spit, and braziers outside to keep warm. The girls decorate the tables with items they find in the Karoo – beautiful pieces of wood, birds' nests, stones with candles mounted on them. It's become such a special tradition that everyone looks forward to so much – it's about being together without a reason like a birthday or Christmas. It's just the best.'

We usually have a lamb on the spit, and braziers outside to keep warm. The girls decorate the tables with items they find in the Karoo – beautiful pieces of wood, birds' nests, stones with candles on them.

A SEAT IN SPACE AND TIME

Monika, Margaret and Marek Niedzwiedzcy are based in New York and Poland.

'My family (Mum, Dad and I) is obsessed with travel and we are always on our way to or from somewhere for business or leisure. Every time we're on a flight, we let one another know which seat we're in. It's the one simple thing we do to make sure we can place each other in time and space at a particular moment. It's like, 'Hey I'm sitting in 6D and it's a Boeing 767!' It's just fun and lighthearted.'

Another little reinvented tradition that goes back to our travel obsession – funny enough, my parents met while travelling – is to say, 'I wish you travel' when someone sneezes, instead of 'I wish you health,' which is what we usually say in Polish. As a kid I thought that was how it was; I'd constantly wish people 'travel' until I figured it out one day – it made for some interesting reactions. I still think it's a nice thing to wish for someone!'

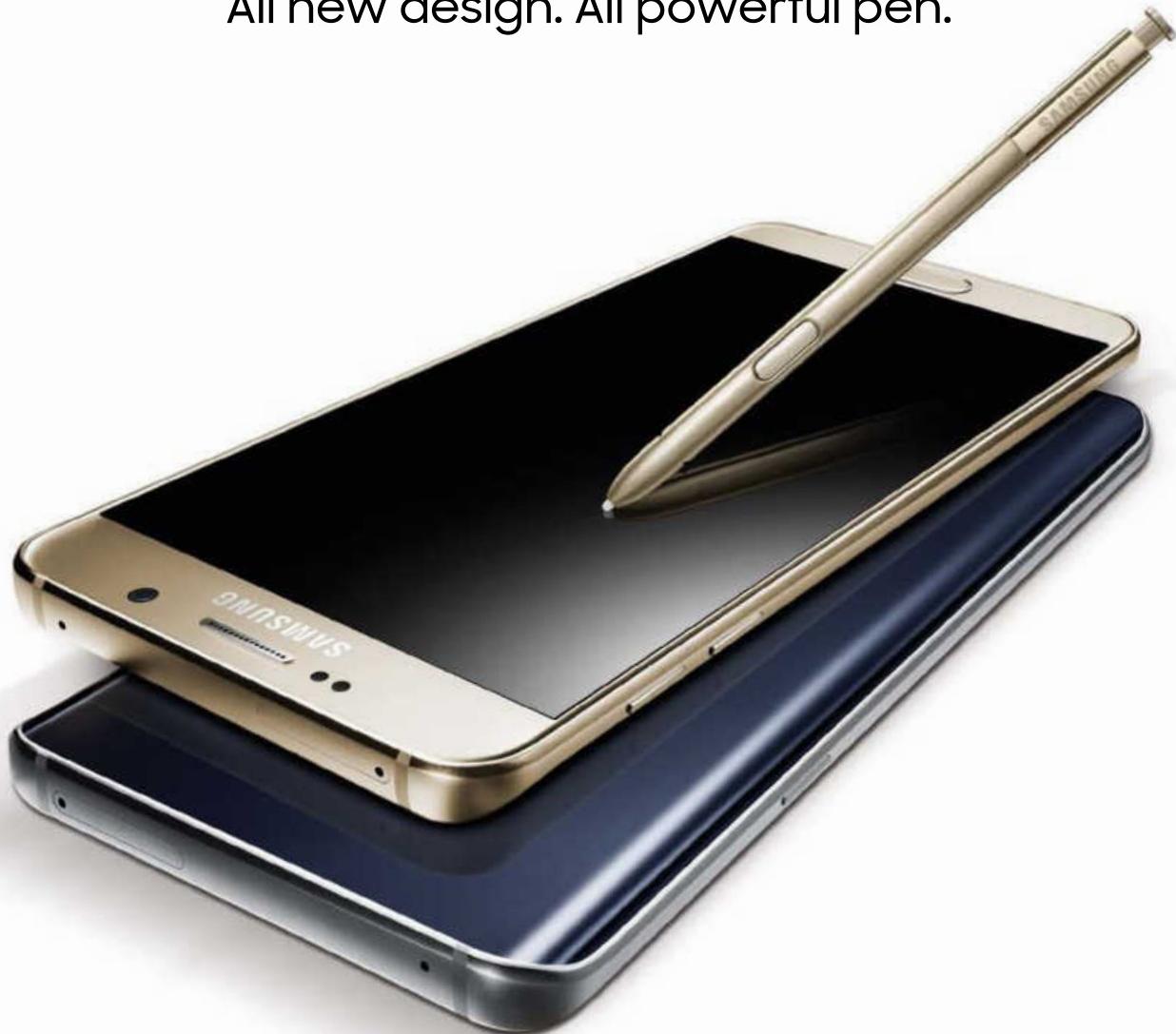
THE ORPHAN'S CHRISTMAS

Chris de Beer, photo journalist, Cape Town

'My friends and I always try to make a point of doing Orphan's Christmas, which stems from the years when my sister and I had no family in the country and would try to put together a meal for friends, usually with leftovers from everyone's family feast. It's a nice way to get away from the family madness for a lot of my mates. Also, my mom always makes a money pudding, usually a malva pudding filled with coins (silver ones only!). My stepsister and I compete for the most money every year.' ♣

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26 ways to *save* *money* **ON HOLIDAY**

Think there's no way you can afford to go anywhere? If you're careful, you might be able to make your hard-earned rands go a whole lot further...

CHECK THE EXPIRY DATE ON YOUR PASSPORT

Really! Even though it feels as if you renewed it only yesterday. When a FAIRLADY staffer and her family checked in for their flight, they were told that their passports had expired! There was nothing they could do but go home. What's more, they thought they'd scored on a cheap flight, and of course there's no refund...



Your passport should be valid for six months after your return date, with at least two unused pages for visa, entry and exit stamps.

– Sharmila Ragunanan, Flight Centre strategic marketing specialist

GO WHERE YOU DON'T NEED A VISA

South African citizens have visa-free access to 97 of the world's 194 countries. Find the full list (plus

vaccination requirements) at www.dfa.gov.za/consular/visareqsapass-holders.html.

We have visa-free access to most of South and Central America and we're good to go to many Asian countries – Hong Kong, Malaysia, Maldives, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Others – like Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Nepal, Sri Lanka and South Korea – will give you a visa when you arrive.

If you're doing work of any kind, even volunteering, you need a visa. So always check before leaving home, Sharmila advises.

IF YOU NEED A VISA, DON'T LEAVE IT TO THE LAST MINUTE TO APPLY!

If you see the best deal ever on a flight, it's tempting to grab the opportunity before it's gone. But if your ticket is non-refundable, you risk losing that money as there's no guarantee you'll get the visa. And even if it is issued, it mightn't be in time. Consulates give expected time frames for processing visas, but don't always meet them. If you're hopping from one European country to the next, apply for your Schengen visa at the consulate of the country you enter first. So if you're arriving in Paris, then taking a coach to Italy from there, apply for your visa at the French consulate.

accommodation

DON'T BOOK TOO FAR AHEAD

This comes with some provisos: probably not a great idea in peak season, or when there's a World Cup going on, obv.



I always use booking.com. The trick is to be on their Value Deals news-

letter. But the best newsletter is Secret Deals – you can save about 60%. You can't book far in advance, though. I travelled through Italy this way. The best deal was €20pp sharing – in a boutique hotel in Rome! On the Amalfi coast, we only paid €30pp sharing, which is very cheap for this area. In Florence, I was on my own, which is more expensive, but at €60 I still saved 30%. My advice is to be patient, don't rush. But once you see a great deal, don't waste a moment – secure it!

– Roxanne Cloete, brand manager

ASK FOR A DISCOUNT

If you're willing to show up without a reservation, it is possible to get a great deal. For a stay of three nights or more, or if you pay cash (which saves the hotel the transaction fee for the credit card), you could also get a discount. Stay at a business hotel during weekends or holiday season, or at a holiday hotel in off-season.

USE TRIPADVISOR TO CHECK OTHERS' EXPERIENCES

Besides being pretty entertaining, scrolling through the 'candid traveller photographs' and reviews gives you a very good idea of whether the accommodation is good, bad, or just plain ugly. And whether bargain prices are too good to be true. Some of the 'terrible' comments – 'the most unpleasant hotel I never slept in', 'four-star scam; world-class disappointment', 'welcome to prison' – get into useful details like, 'sheets were stained', 'your room air conditioning is controlled by reception', 'the handle on the balcony door was removed so guests can't open it' and 'it takes a minimum of two connections to reach this hotel from anywhere of significance' really put you in the picture.

There's plenty of the good too – 'Lovely hotel, treated like a queen.' But even positive comments can reveal more than they intend: if you're looking for something vibey, you won't want to stay in a hotel in a 'lovely quiet area'. Specifically, TripAdvisor gives an idea of the price for your dates, and besides the overall rating, they're broken down into sleep quality, location, rooms, service, value and cleanliness. But don't automatically click the link to book! Once you punch in your dates, booking agencies like Booking.com, Hotels.com, Expedia.com and Venere.com put up their best offers. They pay to be there, and if you click on the link, your hotel pays them commission. Sometimes that is the cheapest deal, but it's worth going directly to the hotel website to check.

TRY AIRBNB

The site lists over 1.5 million beds (anything from air beds and shared spaces, private rooms, entire homes and flats to castles, boats, manors, tree houses, tipis, igloos and private islands) in 34 000 cities and 190 countries. (Turn to page 64 to find out how to set up your own space for short-term rentals.)

Airbnb offers a certain level of security: personal profiles and listings are verified, they have a messaging system to allow communication between hosts and guests, and they hold the payments until the guests have completed their stay. Guests – and hosts – are able to rate one another, so this, and the comments from previous guests, give you a good idea of cleanliness, location and whatever else is a priority. You have to create a profile, but that schlepp is one-off. Then log in, enter your destination, number of guests, dates, room and property type, price range, neighbourhood, and amenities

(like wifi) and trawl the options. They have pics... and those very useful reviews... airbnb.com



'Airbnb is just so much nicer than staying in some anonymous hotel – you have your own little place among the locals for a few days and you really get to discover the neighbourhood. We recently went to Barcelona for a week and chose a little flat that was close to all the tourist attractions, but still far from the madding crowd. It was cheaper in itself, but also in terms of food – we had our own kitchen so we could buy basic groceries and cook for ourselves. We also specifically looked for a place that had a washing machine, so we could travel light.'

– Liesl Robertson, features writer

HOUSE SWAP

You could list your home on a house-swap site – and get a free home stay! If you're willing to allow complete strangers into your home. And if you're willing to risk different standards of cleanliness. Usually you arrange a direct swap – you and the other home owner stay in each other's homes at the same time. But there are other options, like staying as guests with one another. There are several of these sites; [homeexchange.com](#) has over 65 000 homes listed in over 150 countries worldwide.

GET THEE TO A NUNNERY

Reader Renee Erasmus suggests staying in backpackers, BnBs... or a monastery. Check out the website [www.monasterystays.com](#) (these are in Italy). You could also look at [www.goodnightandgodbless.com](#) for ones in other European countries.

food and drink

KNOW WHEN YOU'LL PAY MORE FOR FOOD

In Spain, if you get tapas before 8pm, when most restaurants start serving dinner, you'll save. In Portugal, that beautiful crusty bread and those delish-looking snacks on your table are not free. And if you eat even a bit of them, you'll be charged for the lot. This is where a bit of pre-trip research comes in. And TripAdvisor, for restaurant reviews too.

'I always pack a couple of bottles of wine (or just the foil inner from box wine). I know it's heavy [make sure you're within the weight limit or you'll pay top dollar], but it's worth it as wine is extremely pricey overseas.' – **Caryn McArthy, creative director**



transport

TO FIND THE CHEAPEST FLIGHTS, KNOW THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE

'Flights on any Friday the 13th, Christmas Day or 31 December are sometimes cheaper.' – **Kim Kral, general manager, Flightsite**

'When you book domestic flights, book your outbound and return flight separately, to take advantage of the best prices offered on different airlines,' she says. 'And if possible, be flexible with your departure and return dates. For domestic flights, Saturday afternoon travel is generally cheaper. If you're flexible, use the +/- 3 days option on a website as a day could make a huge difference.'

Subscribe to SouthAfrica.to mailing list. This alerts you to flight specials, and gives you a feel for prices.'

IF YOU'RE NOT AN EXPERIENCED TRAVELLER, CONSULT A TRAVEL AGENT

'The expert staff will get you the best deals on flights and accommodation,' says Sharmila, of Flight Centre. 'Try to book our all-inclusive Red Label Holidays: you get flights, meals and car hire, if you need it. Our Lowest Airfare Guarantee promises that we'll beat same-day airfares for available flights departing from South Africa – or you fly free. If you can, book during Flight Centre's two-day annual Travel Expo in February for amazing discounts.'

USE PRICE COMPARISON SITES

'Using a travel website that deals with all airlines gives more choice and could offer airlines you had not looked at before,' says Kim. Local price comparison site, Flightsite, of which she is GM, is an example. But also compare prices from site to site. So, if you have an idea of your dates, look at [skyscanner.net](#), [kayak.com](#), [expedia.com](#), [momondo.com](#). Click through to the booking phase, as prices often jump up.'

BOOK FLIGHTS 53 DAYS IN ADVANCE

According to research by Momondo a couple of years ago, you'll get the best deal about two months ahead of your flight date – saving almost 30%. They also found that Tuesdays were best priced, as were night flights. Previously, Skyscanner's research showed that booking at the five-week mark scored you the best deals, but it depends on the destination.

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DON'T MISS YOUR FLIGHT!

If you book online, allow enough time between connecting flights. 'You need at least two and a half to four hours when transiting through big airports to collect luggage, go through security and make your way to your departure gate,' says Sharmila.

BOOK A BERTH ON A SLEEPER TRAIN



When I worked in Berlin, I did quite a bit of travelling on the cheap, darting around Europe and backpacking in Southeast Asia. I always overnighted on a train or bus. It saved on accommodation – and was usually cheaper than air tickets. Also, you then have more time for seeing the sights, rather than wasting it in transit. I did land up in some strange 'sleeper' buses with karaoke or kung fu movies blaring on the TV so didn't get much sleep – but it did up the weird-but-wonderful factor! ▶

– Marli Meyer, features writer

sightseeing

NEXT BIRTHDAY, ASK FOR AN EXPERIENCE, NOT MORE STUFF

A Tinggly voucher does the trick! Dan Brown fans might pick an 'Angels and Demons' experience in Rome, outdoorsy types could go canyoning in Madeira, kayaking in Cathedral Cove, New Zealand, or extreme white water rafting in Indonesia. *Game of Thrones* groupie? You're covered in Croatia. (One of ours is the bungee jump off the Bloukrans bridge – the world's highest commercial bungee jump?) All told, there are 350 experiences in 80 countries. There's one price – \$119 [about R1 600] – and your voucher is valid for two years. www.tinggly.com

TO INTERACT WITH A LOCAL, USE VAYABLE

Go onto this platform to 'discover and book unique experiences with a local insider'. New York by Night Photo Tour? Hawaii 5-0 Tour? Underground Restaurant Meal? Explore London Like a Local? Yes, it costs you, but it's likely that local know-how will be worth it. There's a gifting tab too... www.vayable.com

money

CALL YOUR BANK BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Let your bank know which countries you'll pass through (you don't want transactions declined due to 'unusual activity') and note their number in case you need to call them. Every time you draw, there's a fee, so you might want to draw the max each time. Pick ATMs with low or no fees.

THE BEST WAY TO CARRY MONEY IS...

...travellers cheques, travel wallet, credit or debit card? 'Older clients prefer travellers cheques as they can be refunded if stolen or lost,' says Sharmila. But these are being phased out, Kim points out. You're charged commission to buy and redeem them, unless you get Amex and change them at an Amex branch – a schlepp to find. 'Young travellers prefer a travel wallet as their parents can transfer money to it! But most clients prefer to buy foreign exchange,' says Sharmila.

DON'T PAY IN RANDS

You should get bills in the currency of the country you're visiting, says Sharmila. If you're offered dynamic currency conversion (when you're about to pay with your credit card, you have the choice of seeing the amount in rands), decline. Sure, you'd understand the damage

better, but in general the exchange rate is less favourable than it is without that 'service'.

phone



When I went to London, I adjusted the settings on my phone so I'd only get messages, notifications and emails in free wifi zones. I didn't upload photos or videos, or use Facebook, twitter, Google, Instagram or Snapchat on site as they chew data – I waited till I found a cafe or restaurant with a sign on the window saying "free wifi". And I used WhatsApp for calls. ▶ – Chelsea Johnstone, features writer

SPEAK TO YOUR SERVICE PROVIDER

Before you go, discuss the services you need, and the attendant roaming rates. They offer services that minimise the expense. ▶

– Tshepo Ramodibe, executive head of Vodacom Corporate Affairs

He says that, for R30 per day, their Travel Saver package provides roaming at reduced rates in 27 countries. If you don't want to use data roaming, switch it off, advises Tshepo. Select 'Settings' > 'General' > 'Network' > 'Data Roaming'. Disable automatic app refreshes or updates to prevent large data downloads. And if you're on a BlackBerry, BBM isn't free like it is back home – you'll be billed at the data roaming rate. Ouch.

Divert incoming calls to voicemail before you leave, says Tshepo. You'll still be able to make calls. You could buy a SIM card at your destination, but then it's a hassle to give friends and family your new number. ♣





Lipidol is a range of six new oils for daily skincare. Featured product: Lipidol After Shower Oil 175ml. Supplements the skin's natural oily layer stripped away by daily washing. Available at selected Clicks stores at the recommended retail price of R79.95. lipidol.com

Making a splash

Bethany Dickson is what you call a triple threat – that rare breed of performer who can sing, dance and act. And no wonder: being on stage is in her blood. In her programme bio, Bethany dedicates her performances to ‘Dee and Pa’ – her grandparents on her mom’s side, who were big theatre people. ‘I actually have a recording of my gran singing “Hello, Young Lovers” from a performance of *The King and I*,’ says Bethany. ‘The sound is quite scratchy but the quality of her voice is just phenomenal. No microphones – just this booming voice. It always makes me cry. There’s also a section of recorded dialogue between my grandparents; it’s so surreal to listen to that moment suspended in time.’

Bethany’s own mom, Julie, is no stranger to the spotlight either – she has also played the role of Anna Leonowens in *The King and I* (following in her mom’s footsteps), and she and Bethany have even been onstage together. ‘About 13 years ago

After a successful stint overseas, the hit musical *Singin’ in the Rain* is finally coming home for a tour of SA. We caught up with leading lady Bethany Dickson for a glimpse behind the scenes.

we performed in *The Sound of Music* at Artscape – my mom played Maria and I played Louisa von Trapp,’ says Bethany. Then, last year, Bethany kept the tradition going by playing Maria in Pieter Toerien’s production of the hit musical. ‘Connecting to my mom through this beautiful character was such a dream come true,’ she says. ‘When I sing, I can hear my mom in my voice, and it was such an eerie experience to play a role that was still so fresh in my mind – to say the words my mom had said and hear her voice. People often ask what it was like being compared to Julie Andrews and stepping into those very iconic shoes. Obviously I idolise her, but for me it was more about stepping into Julie Dickson’s shoes. She is my greatest inspiration.’

Her first show as Maria passed in a blur, but Bethany will never forget her parents’ reaction to seeing her take up the torch. ‘I had just taken off my wig

backstage when my folks burst through the door of my dressing room, and we all just exploded into tears. We hugged and cried for a couple of minutes. It was a moment I will never forget.’

Bethany describes her childhood as ‘incredibly innocent’. ‘My parents were very strict about certain things (which I found annoying as a teenager, of course) but I’ve realised that their rules protected me from a lot of things: premature heartbreak, out-of-control parties and situations where I would have had to make decisions only adults should make,’ she says. ‘They also compensated for the rules by being extraordinarily cool. My dad would wake me up to go watch a midnight movie with him, or my mom would take me out of school for the day just to spend time together. I always knew I was loved. Which meant I could never use lines like “You don’t trust me” or “You don’t love me” because I knew all too well that that wasn’t the case.’





(•When I
sing, I can
hear my
mom in
my voice•)

Quick- fire QUESTIONS

Favourite TV show: *New Girl*

Favourite film: *Notting Hill*

Dream roles: Anna in *The King and I*, Fantine in *Les Misérables* and Glinda in *Wicked*. (I can't choose just one!)

Book recommendation: I hate to say this, but I'm not a big reader. It's something I'm working on.

Real-life hero: Nelson Mandela

Greatest weakness: Cake!

Pet peeve: Being patted by people or someone kicking my chair from behind...

Favourite fictional character:

Peter Pan

Guilty pleasure: Country music

To relax, I... bake – and eat whatever I've baked

I get choked up when... I see people being kind to one another. Like when

someone gives up their seat to an elderly person on the train... That turns me into a blubbering mess!

Best pick-me-up song: 'Can't Sleep Love' by Pentatonix

Music I'm listening to right now: Troye Sivan, Brooke Fraser... too many to list!

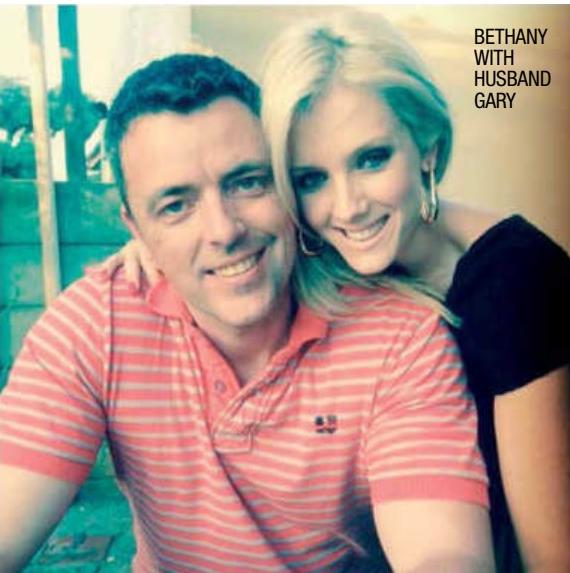
Pets: Tank, our rottweiler, and Piggie, our crazy cat!

Bethany very nearly chose a more conventional career. ‘After studying something completely unrelated (public relations) and not really “chasing” theatre, I still find it quite remarkable that I’m doing what I’m doing,’ she says. ‘It’s such a fickle industry. Some people study and work for years before they crack it. Some people walk right in. I’ve always understood it to be a fleeting opportunity for me. I put my small amount of success down to the fact that this is part of who I am.’

Bethany has been singing ever since she can remember, but she hasn’t always felt at home in the spotlight. ‘I am actually – according to the Myers Briggs personality assessment – more introverted than extroverted. I went through a phase when I thought that showing your teeth on stage was embarrassing,’ she laughs. It was only when she turned 13 that Bethany found her groove. ‘Then all hell broke loose and you couldn’t get me to calm down on stage! My mouth would be so dry after a performance from all the smiling.’

Although her life seems impossibly glamorous, it’s not without its challenges. ‘People often ask me if it’s hard to do the same thing every day,’ says Bethany. ‘It can be really hard, and keeping a piece fresh every night is a huge challenge. But it’s also incredibly rewarding. The stage is such a huge space; it feels infinite.’

The biggest challenge, she says, is having to perform when ill. ‘There’s this weird thing with performers that you go on until you simply cannot. Which means we often perform with stress fractures, bruised bodies,



strained muscles or hoarse voices pumped with steroids; it’s pretty unglamorous most of the time. But it’s worth it when you hear that applause and know you’ve done your job.’

Even though she’s travelling the world, Bethany describes herself as a real homebody. ‘I love seeing the world but it’s hard without my loved ones, especially my husband. Show business is known to be a destroyer of relationships. It’s a real thing. The distance, the absence... it definitely impacts our relationship. There will always be insecurities and worries, but my marriage is rooted in the Lord. With that being our base, I hope we can accomplish anything.’ Bethany also takes comfort in the fact that her situation isn’t permanent. ‘I know that one day I won’t be doing this any more in this capacity, and that I will have my children and we will look back on this. So I think the fact that we are both aware that this is only for now helps fight the heartache of being apart. And the return always feels like another honeymoon!’

Bethany first met her husband, Gary, through church – at the time, she was 12 and Gary 25. ‘I was quite

in love with him from the moment I met him but, needless to say, nothing happened! Then, when I was 17, my now-sister-in-law, Jeanette, decided to play matchmaker – I think she suspected that I had harboured feelings for him for years. She was helping me get ready for the matric dance and very sneakily arranged it so that he could see me all dolled up, hoping it might spark something. I tried to play it cool, but my heart jumped into my throat when he appeared.

We ended up getting together officially when I turned 18.’ Despite their 13-year age gap, they are very much on the same wavelength. ‘He’s a kid at heart, which is just the coolest. I always knew I wanted to marry someone like him. He is the most supportive, kind, generous and Godly man, who is ambitious and busy and loves life and loves me.’

Bethany’s latest role is the female lead in the SA production of *Singin’ in the Rain*. ‘I play the character Kathy Selden, made famous in the movie by Debbie Reynolds,’ she says. ‘It’s crazy – because I love the film and I always wanted to be her character.’ The show has travelled to Wellington and Auckland in New Zealand, Singapore, Manila and Hong Kong, and this month, it comes home to Cape Town. ‘My favourite moment of the show is at the end when we all come out to the finale of the title song. We are all dressed the same, with hats and umbrellas, and we get to dance in the rain! That rain is real, by the way – 12 000 litres of water splash down on the stage – and onto the front rows – at every performance. (Don’t worry, it’s recycled!) ♣

Singin’ in the Rain is on at Artscape from 11 December to 10 January 2016, and at Montecasino in Johannesburg from 15 January to 13 March 2016.



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LINDSAY EAVES (NOW LINDSAY EAVES HUNTER) AT WORK IN THE RISING STAR CAVE SYSTEM

When Wits University announced the groundbreaking discovery of a new species of human relative, *Homo naledi*, the news made headlines worldwide. Meet the female palaeontologists, archaeologists and diggers who, unafraid of working in cramped quarters, answered the call for scientists of slender build...

IN October 2013, Professor Lee Berger, research professor in the Evolutionary Studies Institute at Wits, put an ad on Facebook looking for diggers with experience in palaeontology or archaeology, who were willing to fly to South Africa pronto and work for a month on a dig. The ad contained some rather unusual additional qualifications: that the person be slim and small; that they be fit,

with caving experience, preferably climbing experience too, and that they not be claustrophobic.

Canadian Marina Elliott was busy with a PhD in biological anthropology when her supervisor forwarded her the ad. 'My email was lots of exclamation marks and asterisks!' she says. 'I have an adventurous spirit: I love fieldwork, I love excavation. The opportunity to go to an exotic place to dig hominid material sounded fun, but I wasn't sure whether I could afford to take

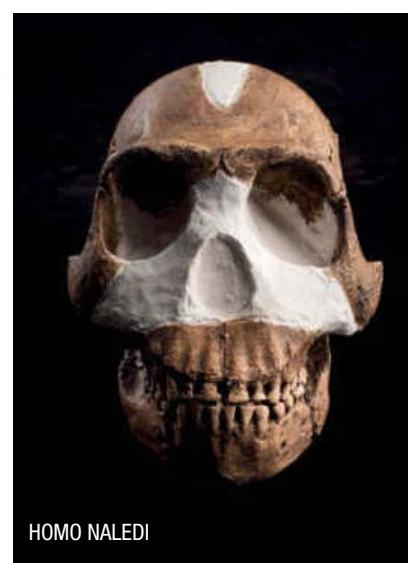


PROF. LEE BERGER
WITH THE RISING
STAR CAVERS
AND EXPLORERS

a month off my PhD to run around in Africa.' Besides her academic qualifications and field experience, Marina has been a field guide in the Rocky Mountains, a dive master in Australia and a veterinary nurse. She's also a keen climber and a spelunker (caver). These skills earned her a Skype interview with Berger, and a couple of days later he said, 'You're in! Pack up and get here.'

A month later she landed in Johannesburg, where she met the other successful applicants, Hannah Morris, Becca Peixotto, Alia Gurtov, Lindsay Eaves and Elen Feuerriegel. The six, all women, had been selected from the 60 people who answered Berger's call. They were tasked with entering the Dinaledi Chamber, where they would have to squeeze themselves through a long vertical chute that narrows to a mere 18 centimetres in order to reach the excavation site.

'We knew very little about what we were getting into,' says Marina.



HOMO NALEDI

'We had pictures of the cave, we could tell it was bone and it was hominid-ish, but didn't know exactly what it was. Certainly, none of us expected it would be a life-altering endeavour.'

Lindsay Eaves, from St Louis, Missouri, had left the PhD programme she was enrolled in. Newly

The ad contained some rather unusual additional qualifications: that the person be slim and small; that they be fit, have caving experience, preferably climbing experience too, and that they not be claustrophobic.

divorced, she was at a loose end, not even sure whether palaeoanthropology was what she wanted to do. But she saw the ad and figured her unusual skill set might fit the brief. 'I almost had a PhD and I had experience working with fossils. My speciality is ribs, and I had travelled across Europe, southern Africa, Chile and the US studying fossils

and modern populations to look at the shape of the ribcage.'

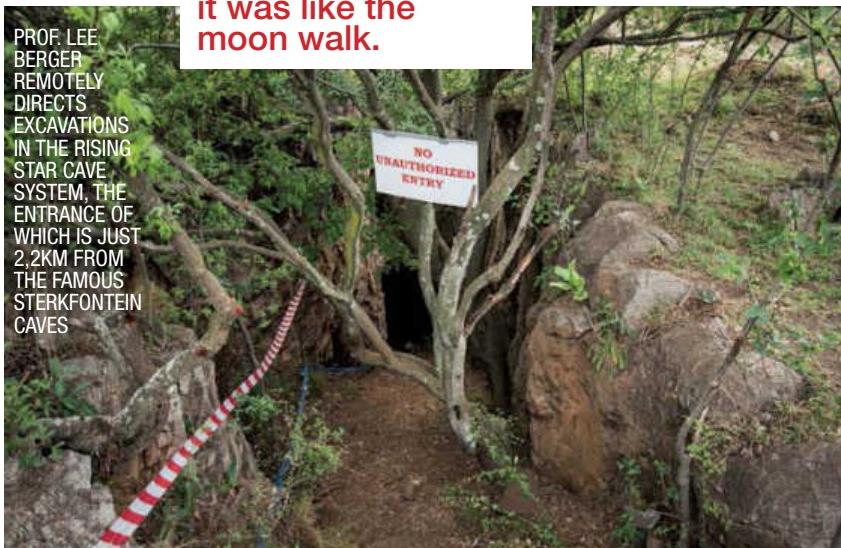
She'd worked as an anatomical prosector, which she explains is like a dissector, but with the aim of displaying anatomical models for medical students. 'It's very painstaking, very delicate work, so in some ways it is similar to working with fossils.'

Lindsay is athletic and adventurous; she's into horse riding, climbing, bouldering and caving, and is even training for a roller derby. 'I don't scare easily and I take acceptable risks without doing anything stupid that would put other people in danger. Horse riders handle physical panic well, because if you panic, the horse panics. It's the same in a cave – if you panic in a cave, a situation that is relatively safe becomes unsafe.' Lindsay's diverse skills earned her a place on the team.

She describes the first encounter with the site, when Marina went in to do the first 3D scans before the



PROF. LEE BERGER REMOTELY DIRECTS EXCAVATIONS IN THE RISING STAR CAVE SYSTEM, THE ENTRANCE OF WHICH IS JUST 2,2KM FROM THE FAMOUS STERKFONTEIN CAVES



excavation began: ‘The whole thing became very real and very emotional for me when I saw her foot moving in front of the camera; her footprints ... it was like the moon walk. There were bones just everywhere, all over one another, all jumbled up. That first glimpse was immensely powerful; I just started crying. I suddenly felt very connected to the past.’

The primary excavation area was about a square metre, with two or three people excavating at a time. A rocky overhang meant they couldn’t stand up, so they were literally working on their hands and knees for four or five hours a day while the others hauled material. Marina describes it as ‘like playing Twister underground, and with bones’, the excavators bumping helmets, passing

tools, holding odd and uncomfortable poses. They worked barefoot, to minimise damage to the material. The six women soon got into a rhythm, and worked well together in this intense environment.

It was very physically demanding. While much was made of the women’s size, athleticism was just as important. Negotiating the 12-metre chute required upper body strength, expertise and concentration, says Marina. ‘The rock is very sharp and narrow. It was very difficult, and if you were distracted or tired, you could get injured. In that environment, even if you just twist an ankle and can’t negotiate the exit, it would mean a big rescue. We were very careful to watch out for one another, to notice if someone

was getting fatigued or stressed and needed a hand or to get out of the cave for a bit. And not to be too proud to say, “Actually yes, I do.”

‘It was an incredibly intense month, very stressful, but also such a pleasure to work with people who were serious about the work and also wanted to have fun with it. The camaraderie was amazing, not just among us six, but the camp organisers, the cooks, the volunteers, the cavers – even the Krugersdorp pub owner! Everyone was supporting us, and it came off so brilliantly.’

What these women had helped to unearth was the largest fossil hominin site in Africa. Lindsay tries to explain the scale of it: ‘We worked steadily for three weeks, and over 1 200 elements were recovered in that time. We are now at 1 550. Everyone was very conscious that this was something extraordinary. No one had ever been involved in a dig of that calibre. Each one of us excavated more fossils than some of the greatest palaeoanthropologists in the history of South Africa did in a 50-year career.’

Palaeontologists are accustomed to working with fragments, but much of the collection from the Dinaledi Chamber was in such excellent shape, says Lindsay, that a school child would be able to match them up to a human skeleton. And there were 15 individuals of the same species. They even got a bit blasé, says Marina. ‘We’d be like, “Agh, not another femur. Can’t we get something else?”’

And as anyone who has followed the story knows, what they discovered was *Homo naledi*, a new species of human relative.

In the news

When the story of the discovery of *Homo naledi* broke in September 2015, a group of people accustomed to labouring unseen and unrecognised was suddenly thrust into the spotlight. The public



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response was unprecedented, illustrating a deep interest in where we come from, and a longing to be part of a historical moment. A hyped-up unveiling studded with dignitaries, international exposure, endless interviews – it was a far cry from that dusty cave.

'I was a little taken aback,' says Marina. 'I thought I'd do half a dozen interviews and then be left alone. That has *so* not happened. It's been exhausting, but I'm super-pleased. If one kid is encouraged to go into the sciences or anthropology, or if one adult learns a bit more about what we do and gets excited about exploration, then I'll do interviews until I'm dead. This stuff is so cool.'

Lindsay, an avid consumer of science on social media who never misses a NASA launch or any historical scientific event, says it was strange to see herself and her team featured like that. 'I am very committed to public outreach and understanding of the sciences, among all ages and all gender orientations. To be able to personally make a contribution to inspiring girls to go into the sciences, to take risks, to go into the outdoors, and to be an adventurer, an explorer... that's wonderful for me.'

Lindsay found more than just palaeontological treasures on this extraordinary adventure; she also met her husband, recreational caver Rick Hunter. Rick and his caving partner Steven Tucker were the first to discover the Dinaledi Chamber. They brought pictures of the human-looking bones to Lee Berger, thereby setting this endeavour in motion.

During the month-long excavation in November 2013, the two men handled cave safety and technical support. 'Rick and I met during the excavation and became good friends,' says Lindsay. 'When I left, we agreed to keep in touch, but we ended up speaking for most of every day! I returned in September the next

year and during that three-month trip he proposed.' The two are married and expecting a baby in January 2016.

Controversy

Perhaps predictably, what followed hot on the heels of the excitement of the unveiling of this new discovery was a certain amount of contention and controversy. Academics took issue with the team's conclusion that the cave was in fact a burial site, and that these primitive hominin may have practised ritual behaviour previously thought to be unique to humans. There is concern at the team's inability, thus far, to date the fossils. And locally, there has been reaction to the presumed racial connotations of the find, and rejection of the idea that humans are related to or descended from other primates.

These reactions have fascinated Lindsay, who plans to register for a PhD to study the social human aspects surrounding the fossils – the dissemination of the information of the find, how it was received by the South African public, how this compares to the reaction to other finds and how it relates to the politics of the time.

In terms of the science, dissent is part of the process. Berger has an 'open source' approach that enables anyone to download information and models and 3D-print the fossils in their own labs. Says Marina: 'It's about hypothesis testing. If you have nobody commenting or challenging you, how do you improve on the ideas and the science? This is the world's legacy, the history of humans. We're saying, "Come, see the fossils for yourself, publish."

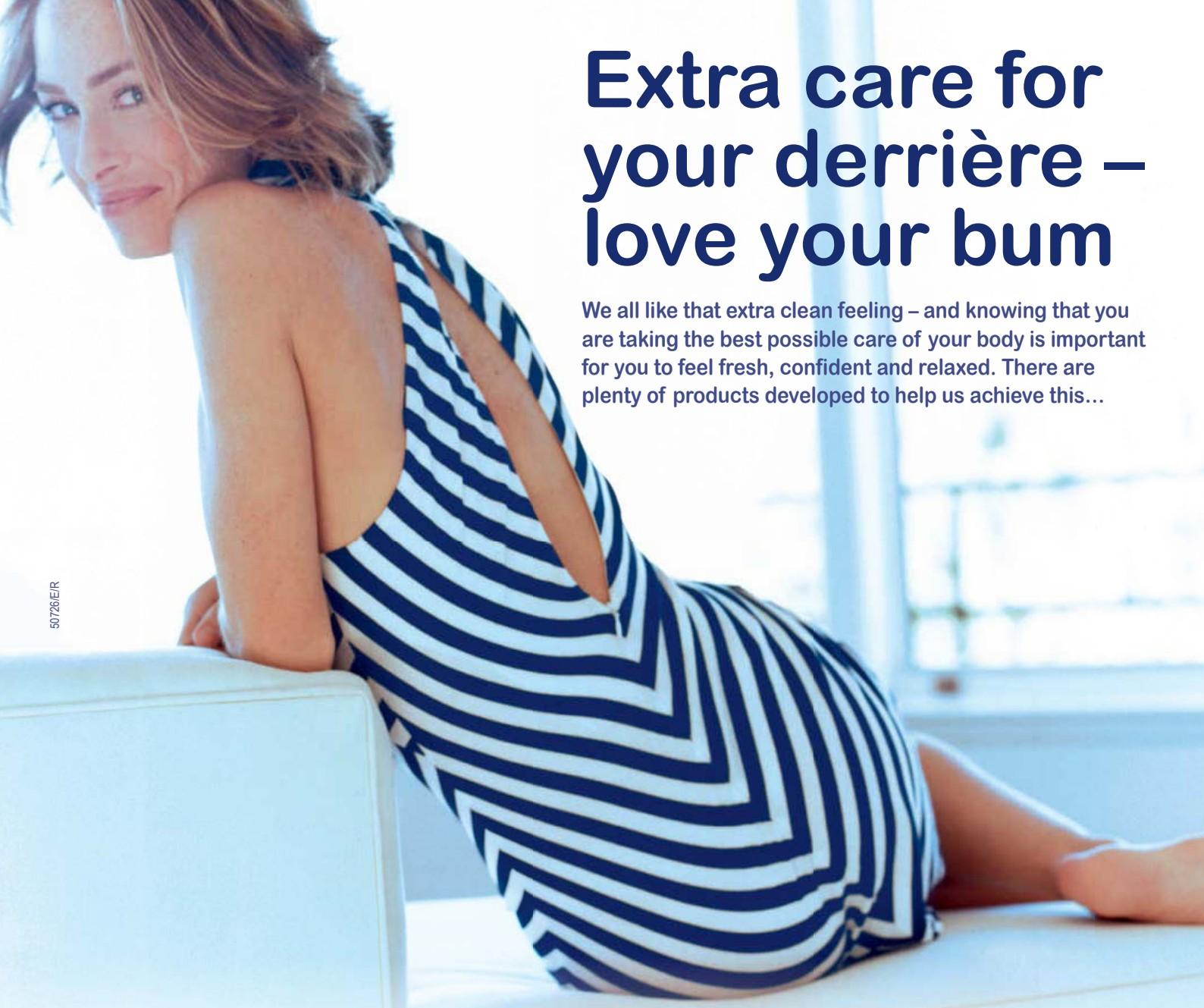
For her, it's exciting that there's so much to discover. 'It's like the world's biggest jigsaw puzzle, but you don't have the edges or the top of the box.'

You get the impression that the people who have been involved in this extraordinary discovery love

the material, are delighted to talk about it, and still can't quite believe their good fortune.

Marina, who is living in Johannesburg and working at Wits University and out in the field, tries to explain how her own life has been turned upside down by the discovery: 'As an emerging scientist, I couldn't have dreamt this. Two years ago I thought I'd finish my degree and get a job. But there are so few opportunities to do this as a career, I thought I'd be a vastly over-educated cheesemonger, maybe doing some contract archaeology, and going on the odd dig. Two years later I'm a year into a postdoc and going on speaking tours! It's surreal. For my parents, too, I think – they've always been supportive of me regardless of what idiocy I was up to. I've been a climber and a menace from the get-go. I like a steep learning curve, so I've had a lot of different jobs – my mom used to call me a vocational butterfly. But it all came together, all the caving, all the climbing, this serendipity of skills and experience.'

We wrap up the interview. Marina is rushing off to Maropeng, but even so she offers to show me the fossil vault, housed in the same building as her office at Wits. It's surprisingly small, shelves dotted with boxes of bones thousands, even millions of years old, the result of decades of exploration and searching. And in the middle, the Taung skull in a glass box, tiny and strangely emotive, *Australopithecus sediba* laid out in another glass box alongside. And along the opposite wall, *Homo naledi*, the rising star brought to the surface by six young women of slender proportions, but of huge courage and spirit. ♣



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PARTY SHY?

HOW TO COPE WITH *your* SOCIAL ANXIETY THIS SEASON

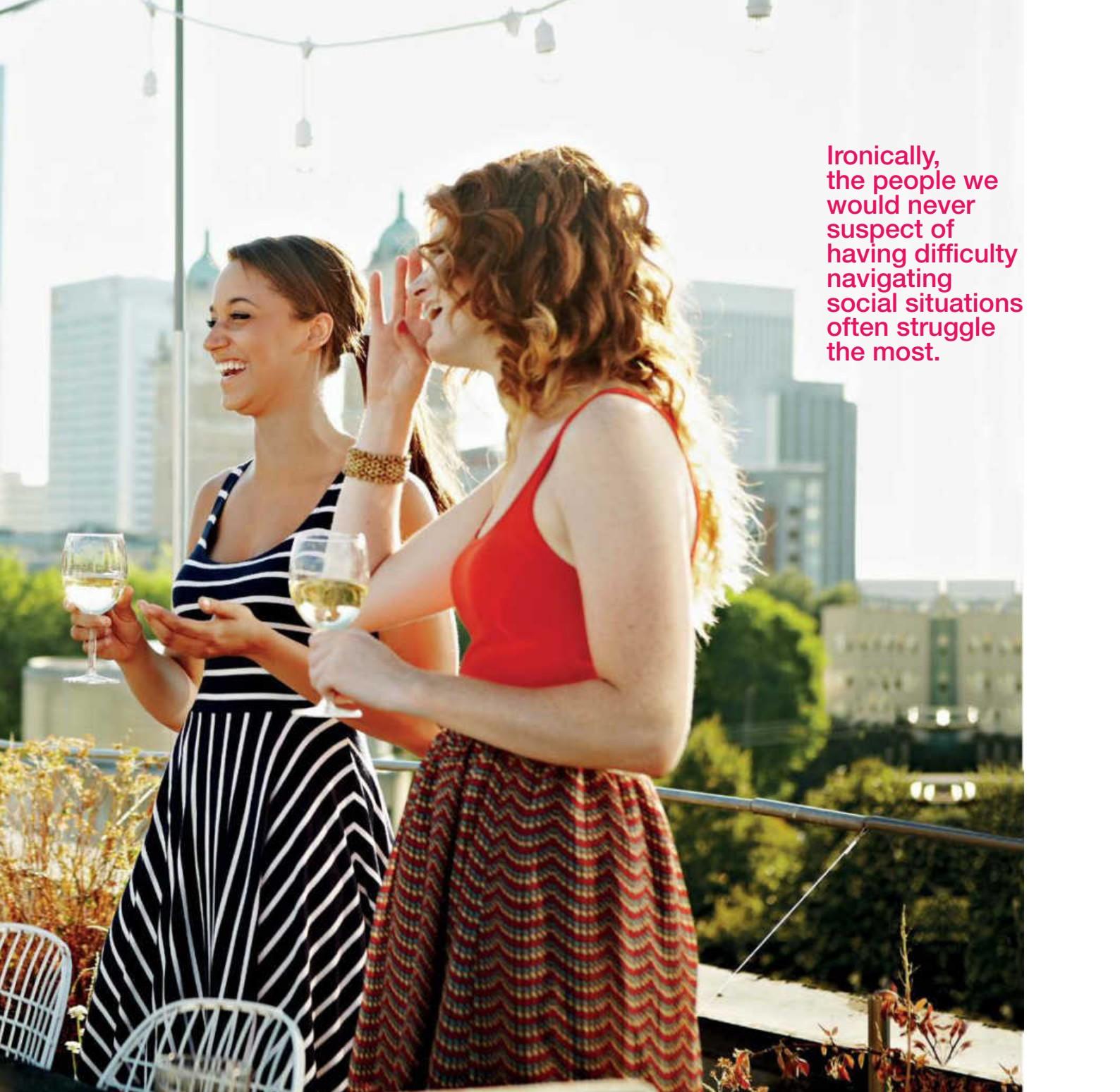
'I'm afraid of everyone,' sang American indie band The National, 'but I don't have the drugs to sort it out.' Whether they were referring to social anxiety, we can't be sure. But many of us can relate to the feeling, even if we don't have full-blown social anxiety.



The difference between shyness and social anxiety (also known as social phobia) is that while shy people may have a difficult time meeting new people and socialising, social anxiety sufferers go to great lengths to avoid

situations that stress them out: job interviews, dates, parties, speaking in public (said to be the most common source of anxiety)... Or – if they do attend that party they've been dreading, they hang back in the kitchen or on the outskirts rather than being at the centre of the festivities.

What sits at the heart of social anxiety, say the experts, is an intense fear of being humiliated in public.



Ironically, the people we would never suspect of having difficulty navigating social situations often struggle the most.

People with social anxiety feel as if they're constantly being judged or scrutinised by others, and are terrified of embarrassment. They are often fearful of authority figures. Ironically, the people we would never suspect of having difficulty navigating social situations often struggle the most.

There's hope, though, and if you work at your social anxiety consistently, you will see positive results.

Accomplished businessman Steve Tobak said of his social anxiety: 'It's a mistake to think I've "conquered" my fear. It's a lot like an addiction. I overcome it each time I speak, but it's always there, lurking in the background, as you can't simply delete those neural pathways. But in time, you can weaken their power to trigger your body's fight-or-flight response by taking the right steps.'

Make relaxing a habit

It's a vicious cycle for those who experience physiological responses to their anxiety. A friend described how her social anxiety, which only surfaced when she was in her twenties, caused profuse sweating whenever she had to attend lectures. The more she perspired, the more anxious she became, and then the more she perspired. It was all she could think

about: there was no way to hide the evidence of her anxiety – would people notice?

Other common responses to social phobia are palpitations, trembling, tense muscles and headaches. If you experience these symptoms of anxiety it's difficult to address them directly, but relaxation techniques could really help to ease your distress. 'Practising relaxation daily allows the state to become familiar, and one you can get into more easily when you need it,' says Johannesburg-based clinical psychologist Dr Colinda Linde. 'Even simple diaphragmatic breathing or meditation on the breath for a few minutes every day can become a powerful and effective habit.'

Thinking that people don't like you or aren't interested in what you have to say is a classic outcome of social anxiety.

TOP TIP: *'When you are about to go into an anxiety-provoking or stressful situation, take five to 10 breaths: breathe in fairly slowly and then exhale through your mouth, very slowly. This lowers the blood pressure and triggers a relaxation response,' says Linde.*

Try changing your thought patterns

If you suffer from social anxiety, you are prone to 'automatic negative thoughts', says Dr Thomas A. Richards, director of the Social Anxiety Institute. You need to learn to catch these thoughts and make them 'rationally neutral', Richards says. And Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), which restructures

the mind by disputing irrational thoughts and beliefs and substituting rational ones in their place is the usual strategy. It can be a battle to try to do this, but it's worth focusing on.

So, for example, if you have to talk in front of a group and catch yourself thinking 'I'm going to embarrass myself', try to counter this by thinking about your track record. How many times before did everything go just fine? If this doesn't help, consider the worst-case scenario. What could possibly go wrong, and what would the repercussions be? Not much, probably; most of us are focused on our own problems, and many struggle with social anxiety and know what you are going through. 'Of course, when you are in the middle of acute anxiety, it is difficult to try to rationalise away the feeling,' says Linde. 'It helps to work on your thought processes before and after the event. Consider your performance during the entire presentation or social event, and not just the one time you went blank for a moment, or mispronounced something.'

Set objective goals

Automatic negative thoughts could lead you to always focus on the negative, and discount the positive. You have a chat with someone at an event and think it went terribly; meanwhile that person is gushing about how nice or interesting you were.

Social anxiety sufferers also tend to maximise what went wrong in a situation, says Linde. They also anticipate – based on this skewed memory – that everything will go wrong next time. 'This ends up in a vicious internal cycle, and the person has typically not "reality tested" what others actually thought of them or their performance. We can call this a "closed feedback loop" – where the evidence is internal and based on biased assumptions.'

Thinking that people don't like you or aren't interested in what you

have to say is a classic outcome of social anxiety. There is a bias in interpreting external cues, Linde says; for example, if a person in the audience looks at their watch or phone while you are giving a speech, you think it can only mean that you are boring them. Identifying all the alternatives is part of 'reality testing' in CBT, she says. Ask yourself what other possible reasons that person might have had for checking their watch – perhaps they have another appointment. And the person on their phone? Maybe they were anxiously awaiting an urgent text.

Another way of getting around the closed feedback loop is to set an objective goal, one that isn't based on how you felt during the ordeal, or what the outcome was. The only question is whether that particular goal was achieved – and any outsider could verify that. The reaction you get from others doesn't matter either; just focus on achieving your goal. So if you're at a braai where you only know one or two people, an objective goal could be to have a one-on-one conversation with just one new person. Whether that person is receptive and friendly towards you is not the issue – you can't control what the other person will do.

Practise and prepare

Linde thinks of social anxiety as being along the lines of a phobia and, as with other phobias, exposure is key, she says. But sufferers usually try to avoid social situations, so they may be lacking in social skills. 'Because of this, CBT also contains a skills component: learning social, conversation and speech-making skills; appropriate body language; how to join and leave a group properly etc.,' she says. 'These skills are then practised with the therapist or in the group, and also in public places.'

WHAT MAKES FRUIT JUICE TASTE LIKE REAL FRUIT?



Fruit cells are the natural citrus fibres found in fruit that give it a flavour worth savouring.



Public speaking requires those giving the speech to be familiar with what they want to say. But this can also apply to social situations like parties, where you are likely to have a dozen different conversations. Just as knowing their material will help a public speaker with their nerves, preparing some conversation topics for the next soirée could really help – whether you use them or not. You're bound to meet some new faces at parties over the festive season, and if you have a few ice-breakers prepared, or witty things to say during lulls in the conversation or while queueing at the bar, you might feel a bit better. If you would rather not do all the talking, ask questions. People love talking about themselves and it will give you time to collect yourself!

TOP TIP: *Linde recommends that before a social event, you write down three comments about the event or general news. Rehearse them out loud at least 10 times before you go. 'The brain needs you to mimic the actual situation as accurately as possible for rehearsal to be effective,' she says. 'For example, many [of my] male clients have rehearsed their wedding speeches while standing in front of their CBT group in their wedding jacket – and every one of them has given positive feedback about how the actual speech went.'*

Be an early bird

Another strategy the friend mentioned earlier found useful was making an effort to arrive at her lectures early. This meant she didn't need to walk into a full room with all eyes on her, and it gave her time to relax before the big, overwhelming crowd arrived – how about trying this at the next event you are invited to?

When to consider treatment

If your social anxiety is severe and you don't see an improvement through your own efforts, seek help from a clinical psychologist (preferably one trained in CBT) or a psychiatrist.

Start small...

'Part of CBT for social anxiety is habituation – exposure to the anxiety feeling, and getting used to it in stages,' says Linde. Ease yourself into the social scene by creating an exposure hierarchy. What terrifies you the most? Put this at the top of your hierarchy. What worries you the least? This is something you should start with. Work your way up the list, using relaxation techniques and rational thinking to help you along the way. This is a kind of systemic desensitisation; slowly exposing someone to what they fear most. You could even start by just visualising social interaction, and trying to deal with any stress that comes about. Then move on to real-life scenarios.

Work on your confidence

Some experts believe low self-esteem can cause or worsen social anxiety, so improving your self-confidence is vital. Social psychologist Amy Cuddy, famous for her TED talk titled 'Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are', advises that you 'fake it 'til you become it'. She believes our body language informs our thoughts and feelings about ourselves. 'When you pretend to be powerful you are more likely to actually feel powerful,' she says. And in terms of hormones, powerful people have higher levels of testosterone and lower levels of cortisol (the stress hormone). Cuddy conducted an experiment where people had to 'power-pose': sit or stand in a way that opens up their body and takes up a lot of space, as opposed to curling up into themselves or cross-

ing their arms, which are signs of vulnerability and fear. They had to power pose for two minutes, while another group posed in the more vulnerable positions. She found that it took just two minutes of posing in a certain way for hormonal changes to happen that either 'configure your brain to basically be assertive, confident and comfortable, or really stress-reactive and feeling shut down.' Those who power-posed had higher levels of testosterone and lower levels of cortisol. 'Our nonverbals do govern how we think and feel about ourselves,' she concluded. Cuddy suggests using the power- poses during evaluative situations, like talking in a social group. Stand confidently, with your back straight, legs slightly apart, and try not to fold your arms. Or do the power poses in private before an event. For example, try standing with your arms above your head in a victorious position for just two minutes before you head out to the bar. Amy Cuddy promises it will change your life in a meaningful way. ♦



FIND HELP ONLINE

A study published on NCBI showed that Internet CBT (ICBT) is as effective as conventional CBT. Plus it's much cheaper.

JOYABLE is an app that consists of 5–10 minute CBT activities that you complete online, wherever and whenever is most convenient for you, along with the support of a coach. It was designed by leading experts in social anxiety, CBT, and online CBT.

THE SOCIAL ANXIETY INSTITUTE (socialanxietyinstitute.org) also has an online treatment programme, a 25-session series taught by Dr Richards. It includes audio therapy, therapy handouts, videos and discussions with other members in a forum.

MORE FRUIT CELLS

For even more of nature's
goodness and flavour.



on the market

This festive season, venture beyond the mall for a more personal shopping experience. We found this in the nostalgia of a market and, surprisingly, on an online gifting shop.

BLUE BIRD GARAGE MARKET

Owners:

Kim and Dylan Speer

Start-up costs:

Under R100 000, spent mostly on furnishings and paint.

Profit:

R50 000–R100 000 per month

‘As soon as we walked into the space, we knew what we were going to do with it,’ says Kim, reflecting on the first time she and her husband Dylan saw the 1920s hangar that now houses their weekly market. The couple started the popular Muizenberg market five years ago and have watched it grow busier and get better every year. ‘We knew the area was full of young families, a lively surfing community

and film and design industry types. At that time there were no markets out this side, so we took the plunge.’ And it has paid off wonderfully – the market grows by an average of 20% every year and was named one of the best food markets in Cape Town by EatOut last year.

Kim comes from a family of entrepreneurs and had previously started a couple of ventures on her own. But Dylan took some convincing. ‘He was wary of owning a business. When we started Blue Bird Garage, he was petrified,’ she says. But the market was the perfect project for the couple to try their hand at together. The landlord gave them flexible terms on the space so that they could get out of the lease if things didn’t work out. ‘Often landlords scare entrepreneurs into signing

two-year leases, but ours was extremely lovely so we didn’t have the stress of that hanging over us,’ says Kim.

The couple did some research and found that the largest concentration of designers at the Cape Town Design Indaba in 2010 were from Muizenberg. ‘There were 15 just from this area, so they were the first people we contacted to take part in the market.’ Today, about 80 percent of the traders at the market are Muizenberg locals.

The great success of the market, which teems with people every Friday night, was exactly what was needed to jump-start Dylan’s entrepreneurial spirit.

He has since gone on to start the Cowboys and Crooks clothing brand, and the couple also created the hugely successful Bar Di Bar food and drink truck, which they later sold.

‘Dylan and I are at the market every Friday night. It’s like hosting a dinner party every week,’ Kim says. Part of what makes the Blue Bird Garage Market so special is that people really feel at home. The traders and regulars are very much a part of a community. ‘We’ve never had one complaint at the market – not one in five years,’ Kim says proudly. ‘It’s good vibes only.’



•Dylan and I are
at the market
every Friday night.
It's like hosting
a dinner party
every week.•



TIDY & CO

The influence of the market has even spilled over onto the streets of Muizenberg. ‘There are kids on bicycles and people hanging out in the streets,’ Kim says. ‘The community comes alive.’

The couple also uses the business to help the designers make their brands sustainable and financially viable, and mentor many creatives and entrepreneurs, sharing opportunities for growth with them. Many designers have since gone on to be involved in the Kalk Bay Co-Op and Platform 8 in Woodstock. ‘I’m so excited about the talent we have,’ says Kim. ‘It’s what keeps me here.’

As for advice for other entrepreneurs, Kim warns against overthinking to the point of being too scared to do anything. Instead, she says, follow your gut. But also take advice from people who know better. If something doesn’t work, change it, come up with a new idea, add something, take something away, but don’t plough through something that’s not working.

‘And be kind to people – that’s the big one,’ she adds with a smile.

Why you should shop at markets this festive season:

Personal touch: Find out where your products come from, and meet the creator face to face. Local is lekker: Give local entrepreneurs and their community direct support.

A complete experience: Enjoy an evening out, try new food, meet new people and explore a new space.

Bring the whole family: Markets are a great place for family outings as they’re usually pet- and child-friendly.

One of a kind: Find unique items with special touches you wouldn’t get at chain stores.

Owner: Nicole Chowles
Start-up costs: R200 000 initially; R100 000 for the website and app development for Gift Finder, which is a unique app tailor-made for us. Most eCommerce sites can use ShopStar.co.za, which wouldn’t be as expensive.
Profit: R0–R50 000. Most of our profits go straight back into marketing. As a young business, we expected that to be the case for the first few years.

By now most of us have accepted the fact that we’ll be spending a significant amount of our precious holiday in malls, walking from store to store in search of gifts, comparing prices and losing any semblance of sanity in the chaos of the festive season.

But finding the perfect gift doesn’t need to be torture, nor does it have to be a guessing game. Enter online gift guru, Tidy & Co. Established in early 2014, the young eCommerce site is geared towards helping users find the perfect present – at a click.

‘Our products are hand-selected, mostly handmade, locally sourced and unique in some way,’ says founder Nicole Chowles. Nicole studied interior design and was a project manager at Design Indaba for two years. ‘I was involved in so many aspects of the business; it was a great learning experience for me,’ she says.

The young entrepreneur (26) has always had a passion for giving gifts. ‘Our values revolve around improving people’s personal relationships. Thoughtful gifts makes people feel loved and appreciated.’

And here’s the really cool thing: Tidy & Co. has a nifty Gift Finder. Just answer a few quirky questions about the person you’re buying for and – voila! Questions like: Are they manly or girly? Metrosexual or somewhere in-between? Are they eco-conscious? A little nerdy? How do you feel about them – ‘They’re

Why you should shop online this festive season:

Spend less time in queues and more time with your loved ones: Shopping online can cut your browsing and buying time in half, plus you can do it from the comfort of your couch.

Stay on budget: Shops just can’t compete with the product selection online, which also means better price points.

Convenient delivery options: Many online stores offer overnight delivery and even operate country-wide (perfect for when loved ones live in other cities).

pretty cool’ or ‘I’d take a bullet’? Your answers are run through an algorithm, which churns out a selection of great ideas! ‘One of my partners is a statistician, so she developed the algorithms. The idea is to link personalities with products so the person ends up with something that actually suits them,’ says Nicole.

The Tidy & Co. user experience is about making gifting pleasurable for the giver, too. This is especially important for eCommerce businesses in SA, as most consumers are still wary of online shopping. ‘The fact that we offer overnight shipping as a standard is a huge plus,’ says Nicole. ‘I wanted it that way because South Africans tend to leave everything to the last minute. So often when they need a gift, they need it now!'

How does she keep up with the Christmas and holiday rush? Pre-planning, she says. ‘I have to make sure I have no admin to do so I can concentrate solely on logistics. During December we pack and wrap orders all day, every day.’ Each gift from Tidy is also hand-wrapped (which Nicole loves doing herself).

It’s clear that Nicole has a rare gift for gifting ‘I recently bought my baby sister an apple tree for her birthday,’ she says, ‘so that one day when she’s grown up, I can teach her to make apple pie!’ Definitely the gifting guru you want on your side. ♣



(I recently bought my baby sister an apple tree for her birthday,' Nicole says, 'so that one day when she's grown up and the tree starts bearing fruit, I can teach her to make apple pie!')

local is lekker

BY LIESL ROBERTSON

Sweet dreams

Move over, Willy Wonka. We met four local entrepreneurs who are making a living from making chocolate, and bringing a bit of this ‘African-born’ billion-dollar industry home in the process.



KEES BEYERS
AT WORK



ABOVE: MARITA
LAMPRECHT PAINTING
EASTER EGGS
RIGHT: A SELECTION OF
BELGIAN PRALINES IN
LA CHOCOLATERIE
ROCOCO



Chocolate should, in theory, be a quintessentially African product: almost two thirds of the world's cocoa beans are grown on our continent. So why is it that we don't have a reputation for making chocolate?

'Africa is known for cocoa beans, but not for chocolate,' says Kees Beyers, owner and founder of Beyers Chocolate. He believes it would take a shift in culture for that to change. 'In South Africa, the average person eats one and a half kilograms of chocolate a year. That might sound like a fair bit, but compared to Europe, where people consume about 10kg per person, it's not much at all.' Despite that, business is good. 'As a business we grow 10–15% year on year, which is well above inflation,' he says. 'And 95% of what we produce is sold in SA.'

Kees, who was born in Belgium, grew up with chocolate. 'A friend's parents had a pastry shop and I spent

a good bit of time there,' he laughs. He went to confectionery school in Antwerp at the age of 12, qualified as a pastry chef at 17 and then spent a year specialising

in cakes, chocolates and ice cream. During a visit to SA, Kees got a job offer and ended up making it his permanent home. He also noticed an obvious gap in the market for quality locally produced chocolates. At just 21, while working as a pastry chef during the day, he started making chocolates at night. Almost 30 years on, Beyers Chocolates is the largest independent manufacturer of boxed chocolate in SA, producing 35 tonnes of chocolate every week. 'Our manufacturing facility covers 13 000 square metres, and we employ 550 people in season,' says Kees. 'We have been supplying Woolworths for 27 years – we make most of their house-brand products – and five years ago we launched our own brand. Beyers Chocolates is the fastest growing part of our business now.'

His favourite part of the job is coming up with new concepts and developing new flavours. Beyers produces a uniquely South African Amarula range, the first cream liqueur chocolates to be made in

Africa. But their fans are still very loyal to another iconic local treat. 'Our single bestselling item is the Sweetie Pie,' says Kees.

Most recently, they launched their first premium range of boxed chocolates, called the Art of Chocolate. 'We put a lot of time and effort into it and these chocolates are the very best we have to offer: beautiful, decadent works of confectionery art, a real treat for the true chocolate connoisseur.' His personal favourite is the Heart of Chocolate collection, which consists of milk, dark and white chocolates.

Though there still aren't any real chocolate schools in SA, the market for good quality chocolate has grown. 'A lot of good brands from overseas are coming in,' says Kees, 'and local manufacturers are starting to pop up.'

Marita Lamprecht, owner of La Chocolaterie Rococo in Oudtshoorn, has seen first-hand how difficult it can be to break into the industry. After years of working as PA to the CEO of a large company, she was ready for a change. 'I was working a full day with no time to express my artistic personality,' she says. 'One day I thought, when I'm old, looking back on my life, I don't want to wonder: "What did I accomplish for myself?"'

Marita decided to become a chocolatier – she had always loved working with chocolate when decorating



LEFT: MARITA'S CHOCOLATE CHRISTMAS BAUBLES
THIS PIC: ALAN IN HIS WORKSHOP
INSET: BONBONS FROM ALEXANDER AVERY FINE CHOCOLATES

cakes. But finding someone to teach her proved nearly impossible. 'After many fruitless attempts to find chocolatiers in South Africa who would be willing to train me, I ended up at the SA Embassy in Brussels. They referred me to chocolate schools in the area, but again I was turned down – this time, due to my age!' (Marita was in her fifties.) 'This, of course, just made me more determined.'

After three years of searching, Marita eventually got in touch with a former chocolate school lecturer in Brussels, who was willing to take her under his wing. 'My visa only allowed for a three-month training period and he warned me that I would have to work very hard to master all the techniques in such a short period. It was a real baptism of fire, but I wanted to show him that he hadn't made a mistake in taking a chance on me, and also prove to myself that I could do it!'

Seven years on, Marita has her own little chocolate shop, where she makes and sells her handcrafted Belgian chocolates – mostly to tourists. 'We are fortunate to be near the Garden Route, and on Route 62, en route to the famous Cango Caves,' she says. Her shop even has a 5-star rating on TripAdvisor, as a 'Must-visit' spot in Oudtshoorn.

Marita develops her own unique ganaches. 'I specialise in Belgian praline. Some of the most popular are our wine infusions: black pepper and shiraz, pinotage, potstill brandy, champagne and vintage reserve port wine. People also love our imported German marzipan with caramelised nuts and 70% chocolate (we call it the 'krokant'), our delectable blue cheese truffles (imagine that on a



cheeseboard!), the dreamy creamy lemon meringue fillings and our own signature chocolate, the lavender-infused praline. And in winter we make our orangettes [orange peel in dark chocolate] – also a favourite.'

Seeing her customers walk in 'eyes closed, sniffing the air' and leaving happy has made all the hard work worth it. 'Had I known the enjoyment of contented customers then, I would have resigned from my job many, many years ago!' she laughs.

Taking the plunge has also paid off for Alan Clegg, owner of Alexander Avery Fine Chocolates.

Although his business is less than two years old, he has found his niche selling wholesale to restaurants and hotels, and making bespoke chocolates for them.

Originally from England, Alan worked in finance for years before deciding to change direction and start his own company. 'Back in the UK I probably wouldn't have thought about it, but South Africans are very entrepreneurial and I had a lot of friends who had successfully created things or started businesses. I saw that there weren't really nice Easter eggs in this country, and I was interested in doing something a bit more creative. It's exciting to start something from scratch rather than



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HAPPY SPORT
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working for a big corporate where you're just a cog in the machine.'

The name was inspired by his sons; Alexander and Avery are their middle names.

Although he did some training with chocolate makers in England, Alan is largely self-taught – a love of food runs in the family. 'My father was a chef and my brother is a chef; as a banker, I was the black sheep,' he laughs.

'The first thing I did was make some Easter eggs, and I had a stall at Taste of Cape Town. Then I started making bonbons and confectionery, and started producing for a few restaurants and hotels.' His focus is on bonbons with contemporary flavours and a darker, less sweet taste. 'I use an imported French couverture chocolate called Valrhona as the raw ingredient,' he says. His chocolates are infused with flavours of his own creation. 'The lemongrass, lime leaf and coconut cream one is very popular, and I've been working a lot with an ornamental citrus called calamansi. But the gin and tonic bonbon is my favourite.' The ganache is infused with juniper berry and gin from local distillery Jorgensen's. 'I love meeting other artisanal producers and incorporating their products,' he says.

Not very many SA chocolate makers have actually attempted making chocolate from cocoa beans, but Cape Town-based brand CocoáFair wanted to do things differently. 'We don't consider ourselves a chocolate-rie,' says co-owner Heinrich Kotze. 'We are chocolate makers. We bring in beans, roast them and make our



HEINRICH KOTZE OF COCOÁFAIR IN HIS WORKSHOP IN WOODSTOCK

own chocolate from scratch.'

'It's clear that people are waking up to the artisanal way of doing things, and I think chocolate will go the same way,' he says. Heinrich is convinced SA chocolate can stand up to its European counterparts. 'Nothing stops us from competing on the world stage. Maybe not from a mass market perspective, but from an artisanal perspective – definitely. We have enough people and passion here to be able to do it.'

The biggest challenge, says Heinrich, is educating people about the bean-to-bar approach. 'Artisanal chocolate is going to taste different. I compare it to making wine. The flavour is dependent on the bean and, as with wine, it also tastes different from one year to the next.' This back-to-basics method also gives them a lot more influence on the taste. 'We try to get the best possible flavours out of the bean: by deciding at what temperature to roast it and how long it's conched, and by not adding any extra flavourants to it.'

At the moment, their beans come from Panama, with some from Peru and Ecuador. 'We're also working with people in Ghana to try and set

up a direct supply chain there,' says Heinrich. As a Fairtrade company, they have strict criteria: the beans must be sustainably farmed, farming practices need to be eco-friendly and the people involved in cultivation must be rewarded. CocoáFair buy their beans directly from the farm. 'So, instead of paying the farmer what they would have got if they sold to a co-op, we pay them what we would have paid a merchant. That full margin now goes to the farm, and that also gives us influence on the type and quality of bean, and how

it's processed.' It was this aspect of the business that first lured Heinrich away from his corporate career. 'I loved the idea that you could have a successful business and do good at the same time,' he says.

Not having access to the chocolate schools and experience they have in Europe has its drawbacks. 'All our specialised machines are imported, so we have no technical support. We service the machines ourselves, with Skype calls to Italy,' he laughs. 'But we are working with a local engineer to see if we can build some of the machines here.'

Their signature flavours are 95% dark chocolate, dark milk chocolate with liquorice and 71% dark with citrus and cardamom. 'We also have a new flavour coming out: white chocolate with passion fruit and pepper,' says Heinrich. 'We probably have some way to go to get our quality absolutely perfect, but we work on it every day. We've learnt a lot from playing around and experimenting.' CocoáFair currently supplies chocolate to hotels, restaurants and bakeries and sells from their premises and at select Spars. They also export to Denmark and Germany. ♣

IT'S COMPLICATED

FAMILY HOLIDAY?

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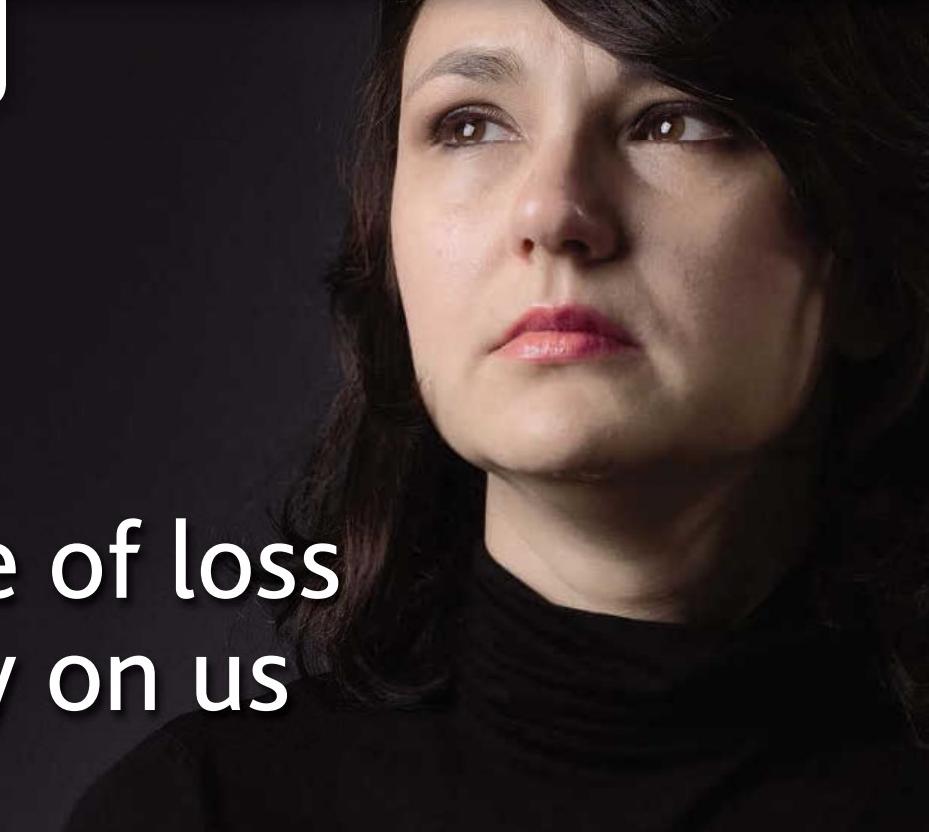
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The heart OF THE rainbow

The best advice I ever got,' says Paul van Zuydam, 'is: "Do a few things, well.'" This may be true, but judging by the fascinating and varied things Paul himself has accomplished in his life, it's not clear that this is advice he ever personally took.

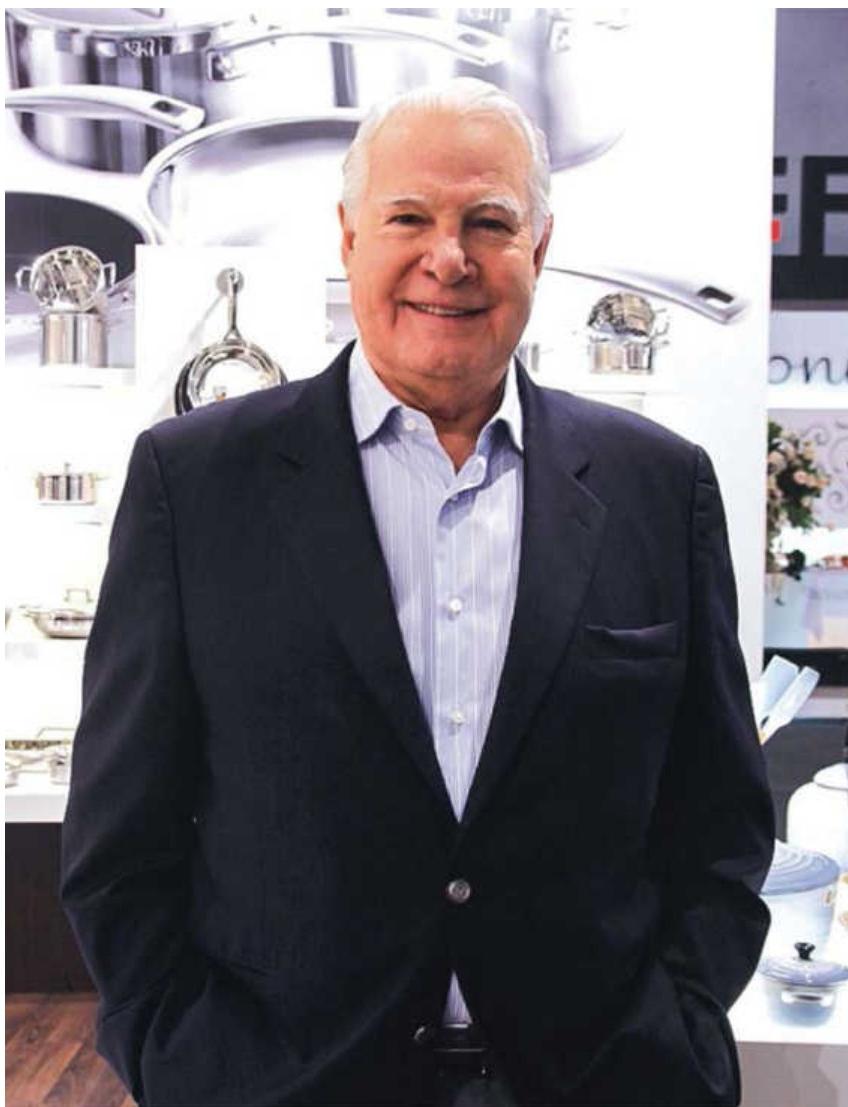
Born on a farm in Zululand ('It said "Zululand" in my passport, not "South Africa",' Paul, now 77, says proudly), he briefly studied agriculture before moving into accountancy

Le Creuset is known as much for their glorious rainbow colours as they are for the magnificence of their pots. What many people don't know is that the man behind the famous French brand is — a South African.

— which, for a farm boy who attended the local farm school for a few years before going to boarding school in Nongoma, KZN, can hardly be called sticking with what you know.

The move towards accountancy, however, was a good one: Paul loved the discipline and clarity of it, and some of what he learnt there has informed the way he operates in business. For instance, Le Creuset, the company he bought in 1988 and has since steered to global success, has no debt. No debt at all. This, at that level of business, is astounding. Paul has never borrowed money





to expand the company (and the business has grown dramatically with him at the helm) – everything he does, is paid for with cash flow. ‘All my new stores for five years ahead are all already catered for,’ he says.

All of this is jumping ahead, though; the first thing Paul did with his accountancy qualification, as one would, was start a tour company offering an overland odyssey from London to Cape Town. ‘A friend and I went to London to continue our studies,’ he says, ‘and we really wanted to see Europe, but didn’t have the money to travel. We knew there were a lot of people who were in the same boat as we were.’

One day, while walking down Piccadilly, he saw a new Volkswagen

Paul has never borrowed money to expand the company (and the business has grown dramatically with him at the helm) – everything he does, is paid for with cash flow.

Kombi for sale for £600. ‘Of course we didn’t have the money to buy it, but with a 10% deposit, we put up an advertisement at the overseas visitors club selling places in the Kombi for an overland tour through Europe and across Africa, to Durban. Within a week we were sold out! So we bought the Kombi, got the food sponsored and set off. Then when I got to Durban, I organised another tour and sent it back.’ He laughs. ‘I saw the whole of Europe like that, but I also

learnt a lot about running a business and the importance of advertising. I learnt that if you work hard and are organised, you can do things – there is no magic to it.’

After four years in Toronto working for a modern retail group (where he became the chief accountant at the age of 26), Paul returned to South Africa to help out one of his uncles. His uncle had signed a guarantee for a German homeware business that was in trouble. ‘Get my money back for me,’ he told Paul, ‘and I’ll give you half.’ In an effort to save money, Paul took on everything himself – from production to engineering to sales, marketing, accounting and restructuring. In the process, he not only succeeded in recouping his uncle’s money, but also turned the business into such a success that The Prestige Group of London – the world’s largest homeware manufacturer outside the US at the time – recognised the threat to their business and offered to buy

a controlling interest. By 1980 Paul had sold all his shares and was invited to become MD of Prestige in London, and in 1983 he became chairman and CEO of Prestige worldwide.

Three years later, a colleague called Paul to tell him about a wonderful enamel cast iron pot company he had found. ‘Le Creuset was a third-generation family business,’ says Paul. ‘Every single pot was individually made and handcrafted. Every single pot came from a Le Creuset foundry in France. I was very interested – I thought it had something unique.’

Paul suggested that Prestige buy the business, but the chairman of American Brands, Prestige’s holding



8 business lessons PAUL from VAN ZUYDAM

company, was put off by the weight of the pots (ironically, this is partly what makes them so fabulous to cook in). Reluctant to approve Paul's plan, he flew him to New York – via Concorde! – to try to talk him out of it, but in the end Paul succeeded in talking *him* around to the idea.

'The deal took months to negotiate,' he says, 'and then finally, right at the last minute, the workers went on strike. There was a strike clause in the agreement which meant Prestige could pull out of the sale, and they told me to kill the deal indefinitely.'

'I learnt a lot about running a business and the importance of advertising. I learnt that if you work hard and are organised, you can do things – there is no magic to it.'

But something about Le Creuset still spoke to Paul. It had all the hallmarks of a good business to him – literally hands-on, in that every piece was handcrafted – and he saw enormous potential in it.

When Prestige were put under political pressure to sell their South African business, Paul insisted that 10% of the sale be given to all the South African employees ('it was unprecedented, but my American bosses were very understanding'). And he used the money he got as a result to buy Le Creuset himself. 'That was my big break in life,' he says. Maybe so, but it was also a huge chance to take; again, not typical of the cautious man he professes to be. 'I liked the product,' Paul says simply. 'Enamel on steel is easy, but enamel on cast iron is very different.'

I liked that all the pots were made by Le Creuset in France, and that the manufacturing standards were so high. The French are such excellent engineers.'

2015 marks Le Creuset's 90th anniversary – and its cast iron pots are all still made in one place in France, albeit, now, in a multitude of glorious colours. The French plant has since been rebuilt and a new state-of-the-art facility has been completed, more than doubling the capacity in order to feed the increasing demand for Le Creuset products worldwide.

Paul has remained steadfastly loyal to the heritage of the original cast iron brand and says he will never move that part of the business away from France, although a billion rand modern ceramic plant in Northern Thailand has been approved and should be in production in 18 months' time. This will take the total group employees to over 3 000 people.

There are now 300 standalone Le Creuset stores, 180 stores-in-stores and over 20 internet stores worldwide. Paul prefers to have his own stores as he can then control the quality of the service. Worldwide, Le Creuset is currently opening more than one store a week and Paul is planning for 1000 stores worldwide within five years.

It's not only the size of the customer base that has rocketed; the variety of products on offer has grown from the original range of pans to incorporate everything from glassware to cooking knives – all made to the same exacting standards.

The global success of the Le Creuset brand is a remarkable achievement for anyone, but for a self-professed cautious farm boy from Zululand, it is extraordinary. ♣

how to Airbnb *your* home

If you're keen to rent out your property – or just a room – to holidaymakers, Airbnb is the way forward. Here's what you need to know.

Airbnb appeared on the scene in 2008 in San Francisco, but here in South Africa, we've only really got on board in the past two years or so. Along with Uber, it's part of the booming 'sharing economy' – which allows people to share resources and customers to access goods without owning them.

Airbnb offers a more authentic, sometimes cheaper way of



THE FINE PRINT

• Airbnb recommends you confirm with your insurance provider that your rental activity is covered under your current policy before listing your space.

• **AIRBNB'S HOST GUARANTEE PROGRAMME:** If you're worried about potential damage to your belongings or property, this programme protects hosts against damages to their own possessions or property by guests. According to Airbnb, it provides protection for up to \$1 000 000 in damages, in the event of guest damages that are not resolved directly with the guest. (Note that the Host Guarantee is not insurance and should not be considered as a replacement or stand-in for homeowners or renters insurance.)

• **SECURITY DEPOSITS:** Ask guests for a security deposit to cover accidents that may occur – wine stains, a broken window, or unreturned keys. You have to add a security deposit to your listing before a reservation is booked – the deposit can't be paid off-site in cash as this violates Airbnb's terms.

Flowers can be a lovely welcome for your guests!

travelling than a hotel stay; you can rent a room, an entire home – or even a castle.

Even more appealing, perhaps, is that you can rent out your home to earn some extra cash. It's as easy as going onto the Airbnb site and clicking on 'become a host' at the top right-hand side of the screen. Airbnb handles all the money, which makes things easier (note that they do take a small service fee). Check out the Airbnb site (www.airbnb.com) for lots of info about how it all works.

HOW TO BE THE HOST WITH THE MOST

Remember that your guests will review you, but you can also review them, which generally ensures good behaviour from both sides. Obviously your space should be neat, tidy – and squeaky clean, but these pointers can make all the difference.

Picture this

You've set up a profile on Airbnb. Next, upload some images of the area you're renting out. The main picture, specifically, should showcase the best feature of your home – this is the picture people see while scrolling through their options. It should draw them in and make them want to see more. A blurry picture with poor lighting won't do the trick. The more pictures you include in your profile, the better. Give potential renters a detailed portfolio of your place, so there won't be any surprises. Be upfront about any shortfalls – don't use angles or editing to try to deceive people. They'll find out the truth when they arrive – and they'll let everyone else know all about it when they write a review! It sounds obvious, but don't take pics at night. Make sure there's plenty of light coming through – if there's one thing we South Africans have to offer, it's sunshine! Show it off.

If you've got it, flaunt it

If you've got something unique or different to offer, let guests know! Include it in your description, for example – 'Cape Dutch house in Vredehoek'. Some tourists are looking for the unique and authentic.

Location, location

Put your area in the listing name. Include photos of your surroundings, and let them know what's nearby, for example: the bus stop is a five-minute walk down the road; there's a grocery store within walking distance; situated close to a beach, park or museum...

Do some spring-cleaning

This one is especially for those of you who plan to rent out your own home. People don't want to live knee-deep in your clutter! Sure – a few ornaments, plants and other knick-knacks create a nice, homey feel. But you don't want countertops overflowing with personal stuff, or drawers full of papers. Leave your guests with space to live!

Splurge where necessary

Towels and linens are important. A thick, fluffy, good-quality towel trumps a thin, raggedy one – it's so worth the extra spend. And then there's the bed. If you don't have a 'real' bed, buy one, with a good mattress to boot. Guests won't be happy sleeping on a futon or a lacklustre mattress – and they will complain. You can save in other areas, but not this one. Tired tourists make crabby tourists. Crabby tourists write bad reviews.

Be flexible with check-in

Your weary travellers can't always control things – if their flight happens to land at 11am, don't make them wait until 5pm to get into their room to unwind – if you can help it.

‘I rent out my home on Airbnb to fund my own holidays’ – Margaux Knuppe, Cape Town

Wi-Fi is essential

Data is super-expensive when you are not in your own country. If you've experienced this yourself, you'll know that Wi-Fi is a must.

Be responsive and available

Airbnb will notify you when someone is interested in staying in your home. From the get-go, always respond to e-mails timeously. When guests are staying, you should be easily reachable via e-mail, in case they have any questions or issues.

Give clear directions to your home

When you're conferring with your guests, let them know exactly how they can get from the airport to your home. They might not have data for GPS, and getting lost in a foreign country or city is no fun.

Stock up on essentials

It's vital to have the necessities available to your guests. Your kitchen should have pots, pans, cutlery, crockery and basic utensils. Always leave a few rolls of toilet paper for them. Provide dishwashing liquid – your guests won't want to buy a whole bottle for a week's stay. You don't necessarily have to provide coffee, tea and milk, but it's a nice touch that they will remember.

Pay attention to the details

Plenty of hangers in the cupboard, a clothes dryer if there is a washing machine, tourist information such as maps, a coffee-table book about the city, a list of places you recommend – these are all small things that are easy to overlook but that will show your guests that you are thoughtful and have gone the extra mile. Another nice option, if you're noticing a lot of the same questions from guests, is to give a list of FAQs. ♦

When did you first sign up on Airbnb?

After hearing about the global success, we signed up in November 2014.

Where is the home you rent out?

We have a three-bedroom townhouse in Chelsea Village in Wynberg (Cape Town's southern suburbs). We list it as a two-bedroom place so we can lock up breakables in the other room.

How often do you rent your place out?

Usually over holiday periods – Christmas, New Year and Easter. So far we have rented it out four times, mostly to families.

What made you decide to become a host on Airbnb?

I had read and heard so many positive stories about Airbnb and how simple it was to list your property. As we were going away for the holidays anyway, I thought it made sense. I was amazed at how easy it was to list our place – it literally took 30 minutes and our place was available. The first enquiry came about four weeks later. I love how user-friendly the site is, and I have the app on my phone so I'm notified immediately when someone is interested. You can manage your calendar around your holidays, only listing your house as available when you are away. Also, the support is amazing: we had a cancellation and I received a call from Airbnb San Francisco to ensure I was happy with that, and that nothing fishy was going on.



Your tips for keeping renters happy?

We always leave fresh milk in the fridge, as well as tea, Nespresso coffee pods and sugar. We also leave a bottle of local wine. That way if they get in late, they don't have to dash off to the shops. Also, I like to leave flowers and a note about the area, the restaurants we recommend and the closest garage.

What have you learnt?

That it's essential to check out previous hosts' reviews of potential guests (to see how they treated the house) as well as guests' reviews of places they have stayed before, to see what they expect. Also, it works when we're away for more than a week at a time; otherwise, it's a lot of preparation for only a few days' gain.

Have you had any problems?

We prefer to have international guests or people who have used Airbnb before and understand the concept. We had an unpleasant experience with a South African couple who didn't understand that this is a home rental, not a serviced guesthouse.

And the positives?

The house has always been well looked after and respected. Some guests have left us gifts, and some have left our place spotless, stripped beds and all.



PHOTOGRAPHS: GALLO IMAGES/GETTY IMAGES, SUPPLIED



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should I tip my Uber driver?

.... And eight other crucial things you need to know.

So, should I tip?

No. The whole point about Uber is that it's meant to be a cashless experience, which means no scrambling for your purse at the end of the trip, frantically trying to work out what a 10% tip would add up to. All you need is a smartphone and credit card. Uber has the following to say: 'You don't need cash when you ride with Uber. Once you arrive at your destination, your fare is automatically charged to your credit card on file – there's no need to tip.'

How can I show my appreciation, then?

By giving the driver a five-star rating.

What's the rating system all about?

At the end of the trip, your fee (which is automatically debited from your account) is sent to your cellphone, along with a request to rate your driver. A consistently high rating means they will continue to work with Uber. The opposite is

also true: if the driver consistently receives low ratings, their 'driver-partnership' with Uber will dissolve. 'All drivers are rated by their clients after their trips and clients can give feedback immediately,' says Alon Lits, regional general manager for Uber in Sub-Saharan Africa. 'We have a zero-tolerance approach to rider safety being compromised and we immediately terminate partnerships with these drivers. Drivers are aware of this zero-tolerance approach.'

But it's also worth remembering that your Uber driver also rates *you*: if you are an awful passenger – i.e. you're not where you said you would be; you're drunk or abusive or you

have a habit of calling and then cancelling cars, you will find that not many Uber drivers respond when you use your app.

Can anyone become an Uber driver?

Firstly, Uber likes to call them partner-drivers, because they see it as a partnership, not an employer-employee relationship. But yes, in theory, anyone with a car could become a driver. As long as they undergo a comprehensive AFIS [Automated Fingerprint Identification System] criminal background check, they have a South African Professional Drivers Permit (PDP) and they have comprehensive commercial insurance, with passenger and third-party liability of R5 million per annum.

Can we split the fare?

Very easily, because of a smart little option called Split Fare which will come up on your phone. This lets you ‘invite’ people sharing your ride to split the costs (they would also have to be linked to Uber). If they accept your invitation, Uber will split the costs. If they don’t, and you were the person who requested the Uber, you’re on your own.

Can my kids use Uber?

Your kids can link to your account with Uber and access it from their own phones, which can be useful if you don’t want to fetch them late at night, for example. You can watch their trip on your phone, which is also useful (and reassuring). But you must be aware that any risks here are yours: Uber’s explicit position is that ‘you must be at least 18 years of age, or the age of legal majority in your jurisdiction, to obtain an account. If they are younger than 18, your kids must be accompanied by you when using Uber’.

WHEN DID IT START?

Initially called ‘UberCab’, it was launched in San Francisco in 2010 by Travis Kalanick and Garrett Camp, who came up with the idea for an on-demand car-service app. The ‘Cab’ was later dropped from the name; authorities objected to it since they were operating without a taxi licence.

THE CASE FOR UBER...

According to Alon, Uber has created over 2000 work opportunities for drivers in South Africa, with plans to grow that to 15000 by the end of 2017. Uber users here completed over two million trips in the first half of 2015 – double those taken in the whole of 2014.

With prices that are often half of what you might pay for a metered taxi, Uber is affordable. Kalanick told *Vanity Fair* in 2014 that the goal was ‘to get to the point that using Uber is cheaper than owning a car’.

An online petition created in Cape Town to keep Uber running was signed by more than 21 000 people. ‘[Uber] has the potential to raise the quality of service in our city and to make on-demand transport services more commuter-focused and commuter-friendly,’ said Councillor Herron.

And in terms of taking work from the metered taxi industry, some argue that instead, Uber is attracting a new client base: people who’ve never used a metered taxi are now using Uber as an alternative to driving home under the influence. That’s got to be a good thing.

ÜBER-VERSATILE

In October this year, a start-up called Convoy raised \$2,5 million in venture financing from investors like Marc Benioff, Drew Houston and Bezos Expeditions. Based on the Uber principle, it provides an online service to companies that need goods transported, connecting them quickly to ships and trucks in their area. With funders like Bezos, it’s clear that the Uber model is being taken seriously in other areas too.

What is surge pricing?

‘Our goal is to be as reliable as possible in connecting you with a driver whenever you need one,’ says Alon. ‘At times of high demand, the number of drivers we can connect you with becomes limited. As a result, prices increase to encourage more drivers to become available. You’ll see a notification screen in your app whenever there is surge pricing, and you first have to accept those higher rates before we connect you to a driver.’

What about the tension between metered taxi drivers and Uber drivers?

Metered taxi drivers make no secret of their ill feeling towards Uber; in July 2015, Uber drivers in Johannesburg were intimidated by metered taxi drivers, and an illegal protest broke out outside Uber’s Joburg offices. The metered taxi industry believes Uber is stealing its customers and routes, and is operating illegally.

Is Uber illegal?

At the moment Uber is in a kind of grey area: Uber drivers have got the required professional drivers’ permits (PDP), they’ve undergone security checks and they have insurance, but the government wants them to have public transport operating permits as well.

In Cape Town, Uber executives were advised by the City that the drivers should get metered taxi licences as a temporary solution. The City has started the process of compiling a by-law to create a legal framework for the e-hailing industry, but ‘this process is still pending,’ says Councillor Brett Herron, mayoral committee member on Transport for the City of Cape Town. ‘It is for the National Minister of Transport to put regulations in place to deal with electronic hailing.’ ♦

Healthy living

4–7–8

This time of year is a rush! Wrapping up your work before going on leave – not to mention all the presents, and organising your feast... Try the 4–7–8 breathing technique. It'll calm you down and even get you to sleep when your mind's racing through all the to-dos that aren't done...



ACTIVITY TRACKER

Sometimes we all need a cheerleader egging us on towards better health and fitness. The UP2 and UP3 activity trackers, at R1 599 and R2 399 respectively, do the trick. They count every step you take, and the intensity, as well as monitoring sleep and resting heart rate – one of the best indicators of overall heart health. The UP3 takes it up a level, tracking specific sleep phases (REM, light and deep) and passive heart rate all day. And your UP really does cheer you on: when you log onto the app, the Smart Coach will congratulate you (when you've earned it!) and offer advice based specifically on your metrics.

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1. Breathe out
2. Close your mouth and breathe in to the count of four.
3. Hold your breath for seven counts.
4. Exhale for eight counts.
5. Repeat the cycle four times.

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RUNNING SHOES

It's best to ask a shop assistant who's trained to help you find the shoe that fits your needs, but these are touted as versatile enough for most distances and types of runners.



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MOVING COMFORT REBOUND RACER SPORTS BRA (R630)
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ADIDAS FIT HIGH RISE TIGHTS (R779)

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5 ways to avoid *overindulging* THIS FESTIVE SEASON

This year, you've been doing very well: you exercise regularly, get a decent night's sleep (mostly), keep the tipple at acceptable levels (sort of), and eat your five veggies a day. And that goes for your budget too: on track! But the season to be merry is upon us, so what now?

Do you reward yourself by going overboard, or do you try to stick to the straight and narrow – and risk being the resident Grinch? Here's how to navigate the pitfalls.

1 KNOW THAT THE FEELING WILL PASS

Some of life's most basic choices involve balancing immediate feelings and long-term interests, say the authors of a *Journal of Consumer Research* article. So is sticking with the programme just a matter of reminding yourself of the long-term gain? Yes, to some degree, but things are never that simple. Your attitude to your emotions comes into play. The researchers believe that you're less likely to abandon a long-term goal (like steering clear of carbs and then scoffing that gift box of chocs, or saving for retirement in favour of another fashion haul) if you understand that feelings pass.

So what do you do? Don't fool yourself into believing that indulging will make you happy. Remind yourself that the mood (happiness/sadness/desire/greed/lethargy) will pass anyway. And you'll be happier in the long term if you don't fall into that trap.

2

CHOOSE TO NURTURE YOURSELF

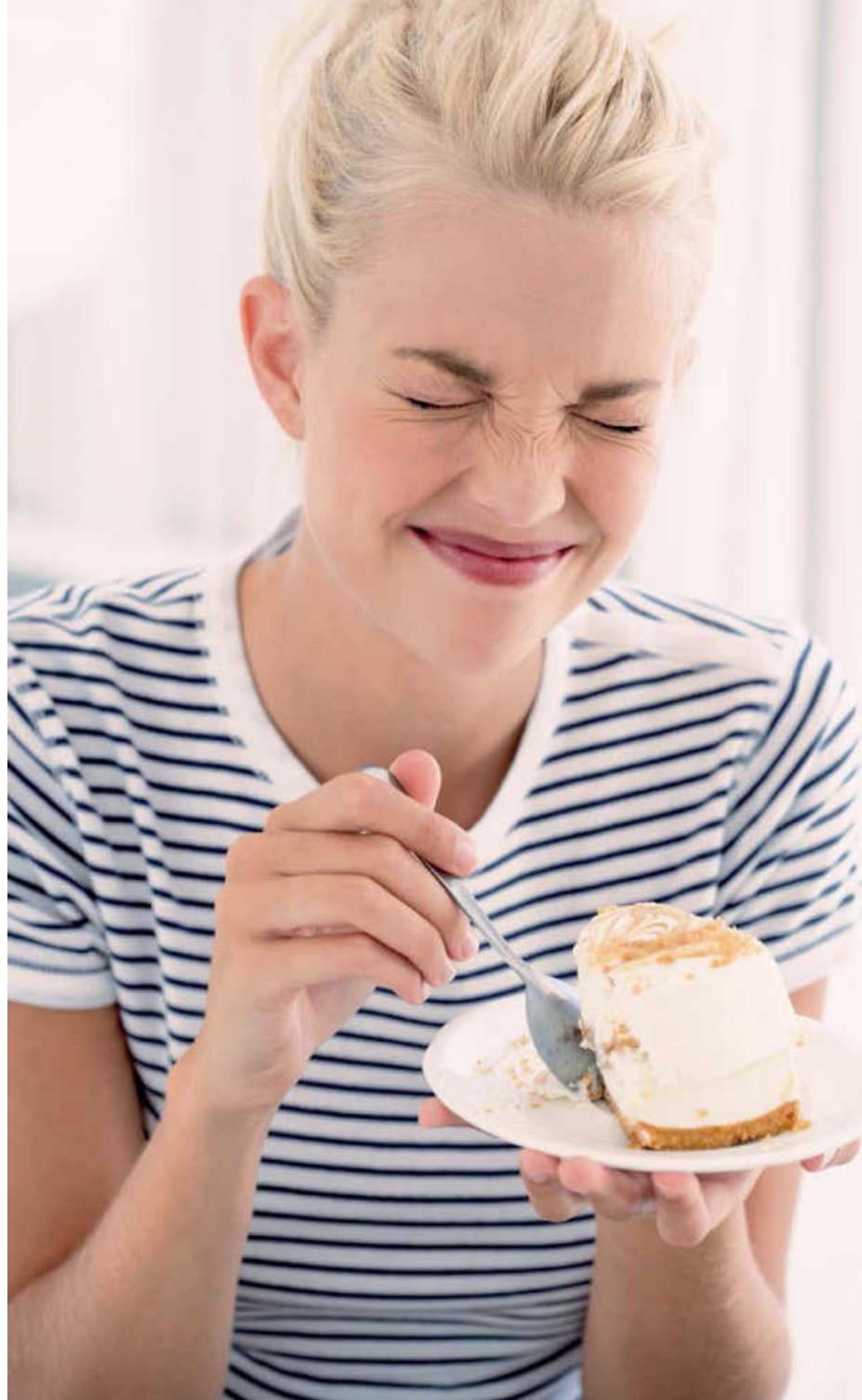
The reason we indulge – in cigarettes, alcohol, drugs, shopping – is to compensate for feeling empty, bored, inadequate, deprived or depressed, explains US psychotherapist Leon Seltzer. And these indulgences do the trick all right. For a little while anyway. But, inevitably, the ‘bill’ will arrive, says Seltzer. What we’ve chosen to make us feel better comes at a cost: ‘As a result of poor food choices or binge eating, we may develop diabetes or heart disease. Or the debts we’ve incurred from gambling, drugs or shopping are now overdue... and unpayable.’

What we need to do instead, he suggests, is to transform from indulging to *nurturing* ourselves, which means to treat ourselves with love, respect and prudence. In a nurturing mindset, you don’t allow yourself to eat dessert for dinner but you do allow dessert after dinner, he explains. And that goes to the choices you make – you focus on taking the best possible care of yourself: is that dessert a chunk of cake, or fresh cherries topped with yoghurt? But it’s a process, and it takes repetition of supportive self-talk. When you wonder what course to follow, ask: ‘Am I indulging or nurturing myself?’

3

SET UP A SPECIFIC STRATEGY

When you have a goal, you’re far more likely to hit it if you set up what psychologist Peter Gollwitzer termed ‘implementation intentions’. This strategy has been proven to work, and it’s simpler than it sounds: instead of vague plans like, ‘I’ll carry on eating healthily at Christmas,’ or ‘I’ll exercise during



the holidays,’ think through the specifics – the when, where and how. So, to keep to that healthy eating plan, tell yourself, ‘When we eat celebratory meals at home or out, I’ll eat a palm-sized portion of the roast/braai with non-starchy veg’ (or whatever is working for you). For exercise, try something like: ‘When I wake up, I’ll get into the outfit I laid out the night before and run/walk along the promenade/go to gym for 30 minutes/an hour.’

4

STAY ON AUTOPILOT

The trick to maintaining your ‘good behaviour’ is to make sure it is automatic – a habit. A study published in *Psychology, Health & Medicine* journal showed that it’s really hard work getting up and running (figuratively speaking), but that once you are, it’s easier to keep on going. Part of the habit-formation loop is having an effective cue. The researchers noted that

weekends and holidays are disruptive because your usual cues are missing. What is your cue? Do you head for the gym the minute your alarm goes off? Then keep doing that. But perhaps just modify things to make life slightly easier. Set your alarm an hour later, since it's the holidays. Do you save money every month? If it's a debit order, it'll keep on happening, even if you're off grid, without access to online banking.

5 FOCUS ON THE HABIT YOU WANT TO KEEP

Do you have loads of goals? Lose weight, drink less, stop smoking, exercise regularly, save money, spring-clean the house... The thing is, research published in the journal of the American Psychological Association showed that the more choices you have to make – ‘Should I go for a run or sleep?’, ‘Eggs or cereal for breakfast?’, ‘Low-fat or full-cream milk in my tea?’, ‘Which shelf should I tidy first?’, ‘Can I afford that lovely pair of shoes?’ – the less you’re able to exercise self-control.

Armed with this knowledge, there are a couple of steps you can take. One, remove as much decision-making from your day as you can: make the behaviours you’d like to support as routine as possible (refer to the previous two points); stick to shopping lists; know the brands you like and stay with them; don’t buy tempting treats; eat a set range of meals...

The other thing you can do, especially during the festive season when your daily routine is disrupted, is to choose the behaviour you’d most like to stick with and focus on that. For the rest, cut yourself some slack. Interestingly, once you entrench one behaviour – getting a 30-minute walk in every day, for example – you’ll be better set to wield that willpower on other things... ♣

SMART MOVES

For most of us, keeping the scales from tipping too far over ‘acceptable’ during the silly season is a concern. These tactics might help.

• Drink water half an hour before your meal

Okay, the study (published in *Obesity Journal*) was a small one, and limited to obese people, but those who drank half a litre of water 30 minutes before each meal lost an average of 4.3kg. Worth doing anyway, we say.

• Keep count

When you’re faced with an array of delicious snacks – especially when those laden trays keep coming past you – it’s easy to lose sight of just how much you’re nibbling. Don’t! Decide how many canapés you’re going to eat, and stop when you reach that limit.

• Eat protein first

This idea is also based on a very small study – this time, on obese people with type 2 diabetes. (If you’re obese, your BMI is 30 or more.) When they ate protein, veg and fat ahead of carbs, they stayed full for longer and had better blood glucose levels.

• Drink ONE glass of wine with your dinner (preferably red)

A small Israeli study on men and women aged 40 to 75 with controlled type 2 diabetes showed that those who had 150ml of wine with their meals had better glycaemic control. And the red wine drinkers also had better levels of HDL cholesterol. In response to these results, Dr James O’Keefe, chief of preventive cardiology at Saint Luke’s Mid America Heart Institute, told *Time* about his own findings: ‘If you have a glass of



red wine with your evening meal tonight, your peak blood sugar, if measured an hour later, would be about 30% lower than if you hadn’t had the wine.’

• Walkabout

We loved this suggestion from WebMD: make a tradition of going for a family walk, either before or after a meal. Harvard Medical School researchers looked at 32 obesity-promoting genes in 12000 people. In those who walked briskly for an hour a day, the effects of those genes were halved! HMS also mentioned a University of Exeter study that found that a 15-minute walk can curb chocolate cravings.

• Eat in whenever you can

Of course you need a break from cooking day in, day out. And with the year-end bonus (we hope you got), you have the freedom to eat out more than usual. But when you eat out, you lose some control over the integrity of the ingredients. Instead, invite friends on the same food/budget wagon (or bantwagon?) over for a bring-and-braai or a potluck dinner. And when you do cook up a meal, double the portion and freeze the other half for another day.



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A photograph of a woman standing against a light blue wall, smiling over her shoulder. She is wearing a bright orange sleeveless top and dark blue denim bermuda shorts, paired with brown strappy sandals. To her right is a potted cactus plant in a white pot. The background is a solid light blue.

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★ *Merry merry!*

Why not make Christmas a formal affair this year? Be inspired by the colour of the season and embrace the chance to get all dolled up – this slinky red number is sure to get you into the festive spirit!

SAVANNAH FLOOR-LENGTH
RUFFLE GOWN (R12 500) KLÜK
CGDT; STACK RINGS (R130–R150
EACH) LOVISA; T-BAR HEELS
(R499) ZOOM



★ Dress to impress

You don't have to bare it all to look sexy. This maxi dress has a full-circle skirt that softly skims your curves, while the draped cowl neck shows off just a hint of cleavage.

MAXI DRESS (R1 650) GERT-JOHAN COETZEE @ SPREE; EARRINGS (R199,50) COLETTE BY COLETTE HAYMAN; GLITTER HEELS (R559) MADISON



Life of the party *

A little sparkly dress is the unofficial uniform of New Year's Eve, so go for something sequined or glittery. Every woman should have a classic embellished cocktail dress tucked away in her closet – all you need to do is mix up your accessories for a totally revamped look.

BEADED BOOBPIPE (R4999) MARI AND ME; EARRINGS (R114,50) COLETTE BY COLETTE HAYMAN; CLUTCH BAG (R499) ZARA; HEELS (R1299) MIMCO, WOOLWORTHS



★ *Steal the spotlight*

Shimmering chevron-print detailing puts a new spin on a classic LBD. A midi-length hem keeps this figure-hugging dress chic and sexy.

STRAPPY DRESS (R1 499) AND JACKET (R839) RIVER ISLAND; EARRINGS (R230) LOVISA; HEELS (R1 490) EUROPART





★ Dress code

'Black tie' doesn't have to mean 'black dress'. Ring the changes with a sleek gown in a cool jewel tone such as deep blue or emerald green. Sheer inserts with beadwork make this one sure to turn heads.

FLOOR-LENGTH GOWN
(R12 000) JAGADI COUTURE;
CHANDELIER EARRINGS (R230)
LOVISA; CAGE HEELS (R1 199)
ZARA

* 3, 2, 1...

If there's one night to go all out, it's New Year's Eve. So pile on the bling, bow details and ruffles. Siren-red makes this ballgown the ultimate style statement.

OFF-THE-SHOULDER DRESS
(R1 950) GERT-JOHAN COETZEE
@ SPREE; EAR CUFF (R230) LOVISA;
HEELS WITH BOW (R449) WILD
ALICE, QUEUE SHOES



1



2



Twinkle in her eye

Shimmery eyeshadow is the number one makeup must-have during the festive season. Use your fingers to get a denser application – the more eyeshadow you get on your lids, the more they'll sparkle – and complete the look with a nude lipgloss. Glittery nail varnish adds a final touch.

WE LOVE 1 PHYSICIAN'S FORMULA ARGAN WEAR ULTRA-NOURISHING ARGAN OIL BLUSH IN NATURAL, R199,95

2 SISLEY PARIS PHYTO EYE TWIST LONG-LASTING WATERPROOF EYESHADOW IN 2 BRONZE, R485

3 ESSENCE BIG BRIGHT EYES IN 03 HIGHLIGHT IT... FUNKY, R38,95

4 LCN NAIL POLISH IN OH MY! SEA TREASURE AHEAD, R170

5 LCN SPECIAL MONO EYESHADOW IN SPOTLIGHT, R275

6 TOM FORD ULTRA SHINE LIP GLOSS IN 02 ROSE CRUSH, R475

7 GUERLAIN EXTRA VOLUME MASCARA IN BLACK, R520

8 GOSH VELVET TOUCH EYE LINER IN 021 RENAISSANCE GOLD, R105

TOP TIP Here's how to achieve Lee-Ann's soft waves: divide your hair into sections, depending on how big or small you want each curl to be. Let hair sit on the curling iron for 10–15 seconds (after applying some heat-protectant spray, of course) and remember to hold the hair tightly around the barrel. Then lightly mist with hairspray to prevent the curls from dropping. Lastly, brush out the hair with a natural bristle brush to create that soft-wave effect.

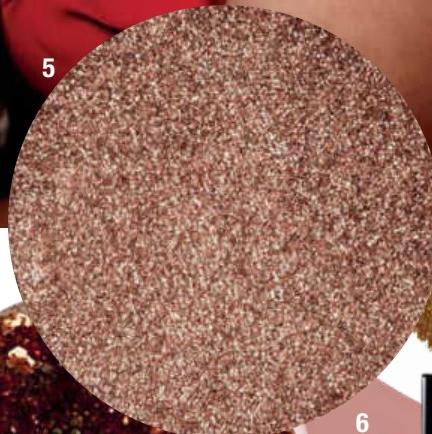
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4



5



6



8





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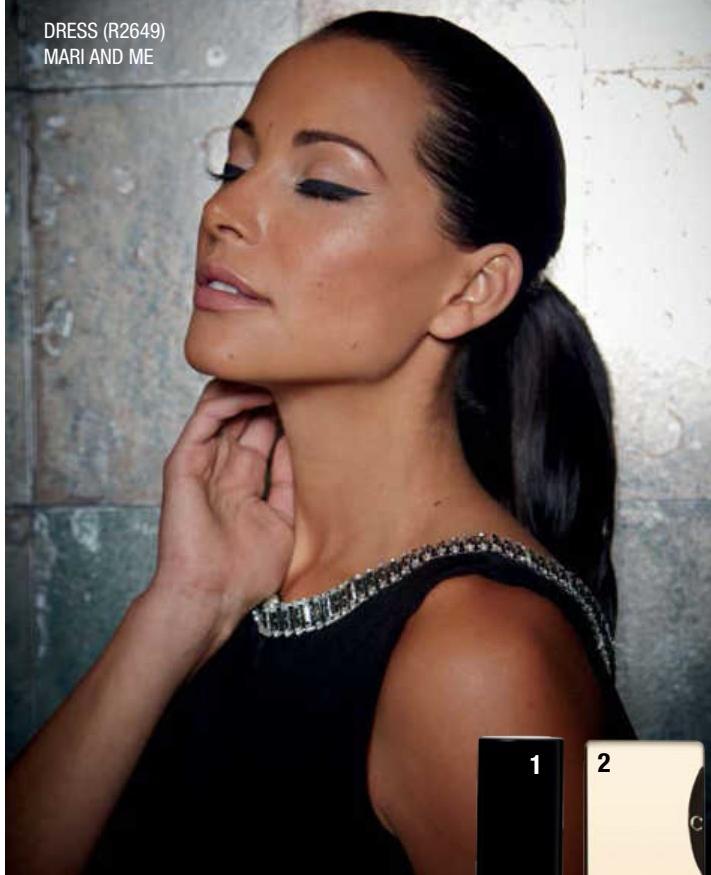
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DAMAGES WITH
AMINO- PROTEIN
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DRESS (R2649)
MARI AND ME



*Crossing the line

For something more classic, revisit the look made famous by Cleopatra: the black winged eye. Subtler than a traditional smoky eye, it is definitely more wearable and will effectively enhance your eye shape. Pick your formula wisely: there's pencil, cream, gel and liquid. Stick to whichever you've mastered (practise makes perfect!) and apply two or three coats of volumising mascara for extra drama.

WE LOVE 1 GOSH NO LIMIT LASH MASCARA IN BLACK, R135

2 CLARINS GLOSS PRODIGE INTENSE SHINE & COLOUR IN NUDE, R275

3 DIORSHOW PRO LINER WATERPROOF IN 092 BACKSTAGE BLACK, R405

4 L'ORÉAL PARIS SUPER LINER BLACKBUSTER EYELINER IN BLACK, R149,95

5 TOM FORD CHEEK COLOR IN 06 WICKED, R625



TOP TIP
Pull your hair back into a sleek pony and let your makeup take centre stage come New Year's Eve. It's a must for those with thick hair as it will leave you feeling cool the entire night.



*Very berry

Swap your traditional cherry red for a pop of berry – it's sexier and requires minimal touch-ups, especially if you coat your lips with a matching pencil and apply the lipstick on top. Prefer a subtler look? Using your finger, simply blot lipstick onto the lips for a stained effect. Pat blush on top to prolong the stain.

WE LOVE 1 DIOR 5 COULEURS EYESHADOW PALETTE IN ETERNAL GOLD (LIMITED EDITION), R935
2 GUERLAIN PARIS ROSE AUX JOUES BLUSH IN 06 PINK ME UP, R735
3 RIMMEL MAGNIF'EYES



MONO EYE SHADOW IN 003 TAUPE MAGNIFICENCE, R69,95
4 AVON BIG & DARING VOLUME MASCARA IN BLACK, R129,90
5 CLARINS ROUGE ECLAT LIPSTICK IN 06 TRUE AUBERGINE, R300
6 L'ORÉAL PARIS BROW ARTIST PLUMPER, R129,95

TOP TIP
Amp up the look even more with just a touch of smoky colour on the eye. Stick to plum, silver, bronze and taupe hues that complement the berry tones perfectly.

HAIR: DALE TITUS AT ONE LEAGUE. MAKEUP: SEBASTINE PEPLER USING DERMALOGICA AT BIRD ON A WIRE. LOCATION: COCO IN CAPE TOWN. BEAUTY ASSISTANT: JANA WESSELS. FASHION INTERN: KIRSTIN GERBER AND ANTHONIE NEL

Gilded glam

GET
THE
LOOK

This party season, dress like a Greek goddess in blush tones, figure-flattering draped dresses and touches of gold.



RIVER ISLAND
GOLD DANGLE
EARRINGS
(R349)



FREE2BU
LACE DRESS
(R299,95)



ACCESSORIZE WITH a cross-body clutch bag to keep your hands free to dance the night away!

DUNE BIANKA
CHAMPAGNE
LUREX CLUTCH
(R1 099,95)

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LOOK FOR nipped-in empire waists and pleated fabrics to hide the season's indulgences.

BEACH BODY *beauty*

Nervous about baring all at the beach this summer? Hey, we get it – it's been a long winter... Get your body confidence back with a bit of much-needed TLC.

1 Beat the bloat

Not only is bloating unflattering, it also makes you feel uncomfortable. Avoid salt, sodium-rich foods, processed foods, carbonated drinks, beans, legumes, and cruciferous vegetables. Instead, stock up on eggs, nuts, berries, yoghurt with live cultures, watermelon, pineapple, apples, and cucumbers.

2 Strengthen and lengthen

Pilates, yoga and barre classes will strengthen your core muscles, work on your posture and help build lean muscle. These types of exercises are great because you don't have to buy expensive equipment or exercise gear to reap the benefits. And if a class filled with people intimidates you, try a 20-minute at-home DVD to help ease you into things.

3 Supplement

Imedeen tablets, for example, improve the skin's tone and texture – brand spokesperson and model Christy Turlington uses the Time Perfection range (R595 for a month's supply), which contains a cocktail of marine complex, vitamin C, lycopene and zinc. Dermatologists are also prescribing probiotics to patients struggling with rosacea, eczema and acne. While they're not the Holy Grail for all-over flawless skin, they can make a visible difference.

4 Scrub-a-dub-dub

To get super-smooth skin, exfoliate once a week. Knees and elbows can become particularly dry and flaky, so give them a good scrub. Or try dry-brushing – models Miranda Kerr and Molly Sims swear by it, and

it has the added benefit of improving circulation and lymphatic drainage.

Nourish

Look out for lotions that moisturise and nourish skin with added vitamins and antioxidants like coenzyme Q10.

This powerful ingredient reduces UV damage and stimulates healthy collagen production for healthy and firmer-looking skin.

Treat Yo'self

Book yourself a good ol' TLC session at a spa – even if it's just a mani – for that 'because you're worth it' feeling. The Cape Grace in Cape Town offers NeoQi hydrotherapy treatments. Or why not visit the new Clarins Beauty Salon in Illovo and try their Sculptor body treatment?

Faux glow

We're not exactly sure why this Jedi mind trick works, but a beachy glow instantly makes

you look and feel slimmer and healthier. If you're going the professional route, try Vita Liberata's odourless, non-toxic and organic spray tan that fades naturally and is formulated to lock in moisture. Going the DIY route? Use a mousse and apply with a self-tan glove for even application.

8 Frozen

Even after weight loss, women still struggle with stubborn fat that no amount of exercise or dieting seems able to banish. Ice-Cream Therapy is non-invasive and freezes and destroys these resistant fat pockets using Cryolipo Fat Freezing (the fat is frozen and destroyed at minus 7–8°C,

explains Dr. Maureen Allem of Skin Renewal). Afterwards, Polydioxane (PDO) threads are inserted to lift and enhance the treated areas. They also stimulate the production of collagen and elastin to make skin firmer and stronger. ♦

A beachy glow instantly makes you look and feel slimmer, sexier and healthier!



1 NIVEA Body Lotion Firming



2 ELEMIS Cellutox Active Body Oil



3 OPTIPIHI Body Curve Polishing Body Cleanser



5 VITA LIBERATA Super Fine Skin Polish



4 FILORGA Soin Corps Detox



7 SORBET Stretch Mark Defence Cream



8 MIO Future Proof Firming Active Body Butter



6 BIONIKE Defence Body Anticellulite Lotion



PRODUCT CREDITS

- Nivea Firming Body Lotion, R64,99
- Elemis Cellutox Active Body Oil, R695
- Optiphi Body Curve Polishing Body Cleanser, R320
- Filorga Detox Body Treatment, R550
- Vita Liberata Super Fine Skin Polish, R525
- Bionike Defence Body Anticellulite Lotion, R295
- Sorbet Stretch Mark Defence Cream, R120
- MIO Future Proof Firming Active Body Butter, R680
- St. Tropez bronzing Mousse, R195,50

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it's a *celebration!*

JUNIOR FOOD EDITOR PIA-ALEXA DUARTE
PHOTOGRAPHER ANÈL VAN DER MERWE

There's nothing better than sitting down to a table loaded with delicious goodies, surrounded by beloved family and friends.



*Fifteen brilliant festive
recipes to make your
celebrations extra
special – and extra
easy for you.*

BUTTER-BASTED
TURKEY WITH A
CLASSIC HERB
STUFFING
**RECIPE ON
PAGE 96**





Butter-basted turkey with a classic herb stuffing

Serves 8–10

FOR THE STUFFING

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 250g pork sausage mince
- 100g breadcrumbs
- 1 tbsp each thyme & oregano, finely chopped

FOR THE TURKEY

- 2 red onions, quartered
- 1 x 1.8–2kg turkey, thoroughly defrosted, with giblets removed
- 180g butter, softened
- 1 tbsp each thyme, rosemary & parsley, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- Zest & juice of 1 lemon
- Salt & milled black pepper
- Bay leaves

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C.

2. To make the stuffing: Heat oil



in a pan and fry onion until golden. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute, then set aside to cool. Once cooled, add the mince, breadcrumbs and herbs and season well. Set aside.

3. For the turkey: Place the onions in a large roasting pan and arrange the turkey on top.

4. Combine the butter, herbs, garlic and lemon and season with salt and pepper. Slather the butter onto the skin of the turkey and tuck some of it under the skin along with bay leaves.

5. Fill the cavity with the stuffing and truss the bird to ensure it cooks evenly. See TIPS on page 107.

6. Cover the pan with foil and roast, covered, for 2–2½ hours, basting with the pan juices every 30 minutes.

7. Remove the foil, increase the heat to 190°C and roast for a further 30–40 minutes until golden brown and cooked through.



BAKED
TROUT WITH
A WHITE
WINE, LEMON
& DILL
BUTTER
SAUCE
**RECIPE ON
PAGE 99**



CRISPY
GOLDEN ROAST
POTATOES
**RECIPE ON
PAGE 99**

ROASTED BUTTERFLIED LEG OF LAMB



8. To serve: Carve the turkey into portions, arrange on a platter and serve while hot.

Roasted butterflied leg of lamb

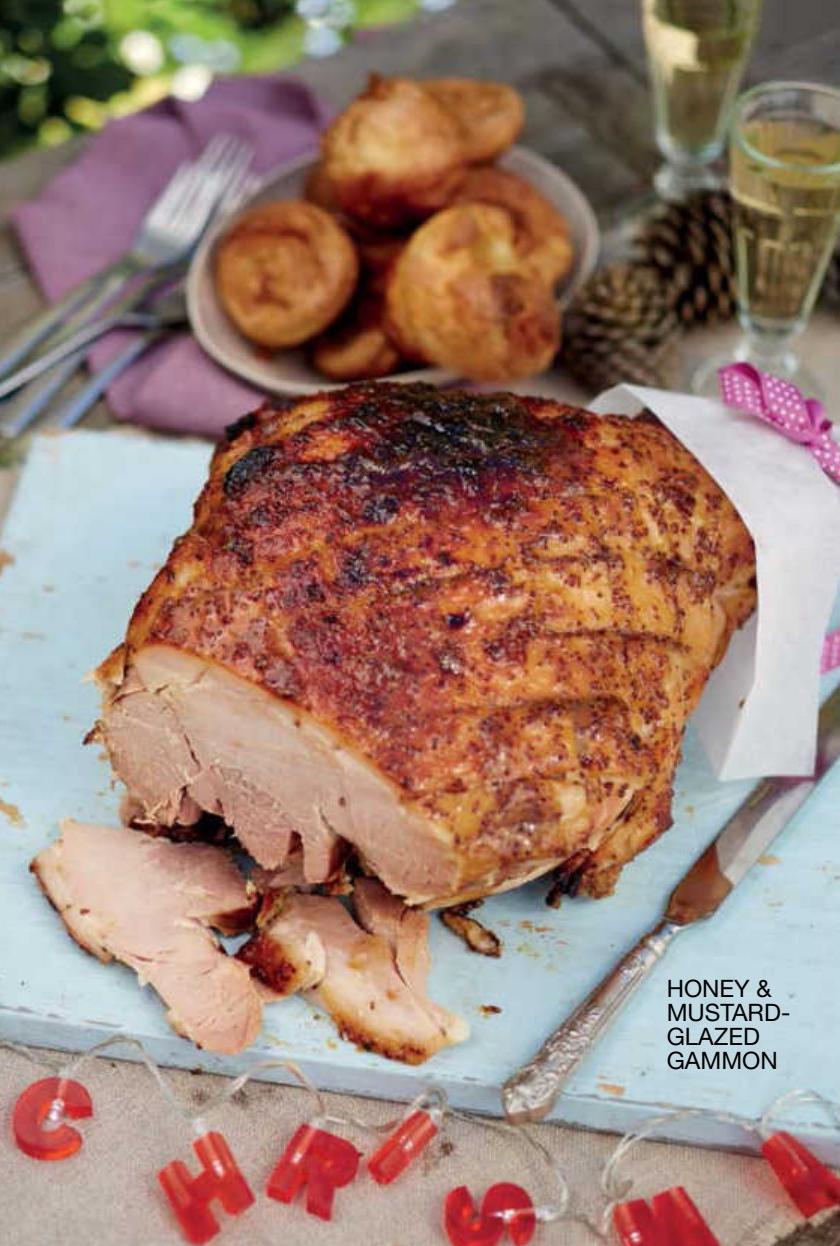
Serves 8–10

1.5–2kg deboned leg of lamb

FOR THE MARINADE

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
3 tbsp rosemary, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
Zest & juice of 1 lemon
6 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
Salt & milled black pepper

1. Place the lamb on a board, skin side down. Using a sharp knife, carefully make incisions into the thicker end of the lamb to help open it up and ensure it cooks evenly.
2. Combine all marinade ingredients together and rub over the lamb.
3. Place in a dish and leave to marinate for at least 30 minutes (or overnight).
4. Preheat the oven to 200°C.
5. Transfer the lamb and marinade to a roasting pan and roast for 20 minutes until golden, then reduce



HONEY &
MUSTARD-
GLAZED
GAMMON

the temperature to 180°C and cook for a further 25–35 minutes or until done to your liking.

6. Rest the meat for about 10 minutes before slicing.

7. To serve: Slice thinly and arrange on a serving platter.

Honey & mustard-glazed gammon

Serves 8–10

5kg bone-in or 4kg deboned gammon

FOR THE GLAZE

½ cup honey
½ cup brown sugar
3 tbsp dijon mustard
2 tbsp wholegrain mustard
Salt & milled black pepper

1. Place the gammon in a large pot and cover with cold water.

2. Bring to a rolling boil, then reduce heat slightly and simmer for 2½ hours, topping up the water when needed.

3. Switch off the heat and cover the pot with a lid. Leave the gammon to cool in the liquid.

4. To make the glaze: Combine all ingredients in a saucepan, stir over medium heat until the honey has dissolved, and then boil for about 10 minutes until thick and syrupy. Set aside to cool.

5. Remove gammon from the cooking water and pat dry with paper towel.

6. Preheat the oven to 190°C.

7. Carefully cut the skin from the joint, leaving a thin layer of fat on the meat.

8. Score diamond patterns over the gammon and brush over half the

glaze. Roast for about 40 minutes, basting with the glaze every 10 minutes until the crust is caramelised and crisp.

9. To serve: Carve the gammon and serve warm or at room temperature.

Baked trout with a white wine, lemon & dill butter sauce

Serves 8–10

This is a great low-carb, baning-style option for your Christmas spread.

8–10 x 180g rainbow trout fillets

2 lemons, thinly sliced

4g large sprigs fresh dill

Extra virgin olive oil

FOR THE SAUCE

2 cups dry white wine or fish stock

Zest of 1 lemon

1 clove garlic, crushed

100g butter

1 tbsp fresh dill, finely chopped

Salt & milled black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Place each fillet skin side down onto a large square of greaseproof paper.

3. Top each fillet with a few slices of lemon and a sprig of dill.

4. Wrap the fish in the paper, ensuring you close all the edges to completely seal it in.

5. Bake for 20–25 minutes, then remove from the oven and set aside for 5 minutes before opening and serving.

6. To make the sauce: Place the wine (or stock), lemon zest and garlic in a saucepan and boil until reduced by half. Remove from the heat and whisk in the butter and dill. Season to taste and pour into a serving jug.

7. To serve: Arrange the fish on serving plates or a platter and serve warm, drizzled with the warm sauce.



GAMMON

- If using a deboned gammon, cook it for the same amount of time but leave it in its netting to ensure it cooks evenly.
- You can make the glaze up to 1 week in advance and store it in the fridge in an airtight container.
- You can cook the gammon the night before you want to serve it, then leave it to cool overnight and prepare it the next morning to save time and stove space.
- Gammon leftovers are so versatile and delicious – thinly slice and serve with mustard mayonnaise on sandwiches for a delicious lunch.

TURKEY

- Trussing a turkey is simple: tie the legs together with string to hold them close to the body of the bird so they don't dry out while cooking.
- Turkey takes quite a long time to thaw: take it out the day before and allow to thaw slowly in a cool place.
- Ensure that giblets are removed before adding the stuffing!
- For onion gravy: add 2 tbsp flour to pan juices; place over a low heat, stirring to form a paste; slowly add 2 cups chicken stock and cook for 10 minutes until thickened. Season well and serve.

LAMB

- This lamb is delicious served with minted peas; simply blanch peas in boiling water, then drain and toss with 1 tbsp butter, a sprinkle of salt and white pepper and 1 tbsp finely sliced mint leaves.
- Save time by getting your butcher to butterfly the leg of lamb for you.
- Once cooked, the anchovies dissolve and add a deep, saltiness to the dish that is not at all fishy.
- Leftover lamb is perfect for a Greek-style Boxing Day lunch with pita bread, tzatziki and hummus.

FISH

- You can use any sustainable fish you like to make this dish.
- Prepare the fish up to Step 4 the day before, then just pop the parcels into the oven to cook for 25 minutes before serving.
- The sauce can be made in advance, but once chilled the butter will set, so reheat in a saucepan over medium heat and whisk until well combined.

ON THE SIDE

Crispy golden roast potatoes

Serves 8–10

18–20 medium-sized multipurpose potatoes (we used the Avalanche variety), peeled & halved

¼ cup duck fat or vegetable oil

Salt & milled white or black pepper

1. Place the potatoes in a large pot of well-salted boiling water.

2. Cook for about 10 minutes until the potatoes are just tender around the edges but still firm in the centre. Drain off the water, place the potatoes in a roasting pan and allow to cool.

3. Preheat the oven to 190°C.

4. Dot the fat over the potatoes and toss potatoes in a colander to roughen them up – this will help ensure they're extra-crispy.

5. Season well with salt and pepper.

6. Roast for 50–60 minutes, turning them every now and then until crisp and crunchy on all sides.

7. To serve: Serve in a roasting dish, scattered with sea salt flakes.

Fluffy yorkshire puddings

Makes 12–16

500ml sunflower or canola oil for cooking

FOR THE BATTER

4 eggs

225g flour

300ml milk

1½ tsp salt

Salt & milled black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C.

2. Place a 12-cup muffin pan on top of a large baking tray and fill each cup with 2–3 tbsp oil. Now place the muffin pan in the oven to heat up;



WARM ROASTED
VEGETABLE SALAD
TOSSED WITH
GARLICKY
YOGHURT
DRESSING

BACON-
SAUTÉED
BRUSSELS
SPROUTS
**RECIPE ON
PAGE 102**

GREEN BEAN,
BROCCOLI,
MANGETOUT
& ASPARAGUS
PLATTER
**RECIPE ON
PAGE 102**

it is essential that the oil is piping hot when the batter is added to ensure that the yorkshire puddings are fluffy.

3. To make the batter: Place all the ingredients in a bowl and whisk until smooth. Season well with salt and pepper and pour the batter into a jug. **4. Carefully remove the muffin pan from the oven** (being careful not to spill the hot oil) and fill each cup of the pan with the batter. The batter should sizzle and start to bubble when it touches the oil.

5. Return the pan to the hot oven and bake for 15–20 minutes until the yorkshire puddings are a deep golden brown and well risen. The puds should be firm and crisp to the touch.

6. Remove the puddings from the pan and place on paper towel to drain off any excess oil.

7. Repeat the process with any remaining batter.

8. To serve: Serve yorkshire puddings warm with gammon or turkey and gravy.

Warm roasted vegetable salad tossed with garlicky yoghurt dressing

Serves 8–10

2 small butternuts, sliced into wedges
Olive oil for drizzling
Salt & freshly milled black pepper
2 red onions, sliced
400g mixed baby carrots
1 head garlic, halved horizontally
4 bell peppers, seeded & sliced
800g mixed baby marrows, sliced
2 x 400g cans chickpeas, drained & rinsed
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander

FOR THE DRESSING

1 cup greek yoghurt
1 clove garlic, crushed
2–3 tbsp lemon juice
Salt & milled black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C.
2. Arrange butternut on a baking tray,



YORKSHIRE PUDS

- Don't be tempted to open the oven door for the first 15 minutes of cooking as this will reduce the oven temperature and may make the puds collapse.
- Be extra careful when handling the hot oil – use silicone mittens or thick oven gloves when handling the hot tray.
- Placing the muffin pan on a larger baking tray will catch any oil that

may overflow from the pan when the batter is added, plus it makes it easier to take the hot puds out of the oven.
• Bake the yorkshire puddings a few hours in advance, and then pop them onto a baking tray in a 180°C oven for 10–15 minutes before serving to crisp them up, or make the batter in advance and cook the puds 30 minutes before serving.

WARM ROASTED VEGETABLE SALAD

- Use pumpkin instead of butternut, and broccoli instead of carrots for a banting-style option.
- This salad is delicious served at

room temperature so it can be made and plated a few hours in advance, then topped with dressing when served.

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

- If you don't like blue cheese, feta or ricotta cheese would also work well in
- Streaky bacon may be used instead of back bacon.

ROAST POTATOES

- These are so delicious that they are gobble up fast. However, if your guests aren't potato fans, just use fewer potatoes.
- To save on prep time on Christmas Day, parboil the potatoes a day ahead, and then drain them and refrigerate in a container. Continue with Step 3 an hour before eating.
- Parboiled whole baby potatoes may be used: simply reduce the roasting time by half.

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FOR YOUR NEXT MEAL?**



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drizzle with olive oil and season.

3. Roast for 10 minutes.

4. Add the remaining ingredients, drizzle with a little more oil and roast for another 30 minutes until the veggies are cooked.

5. Combine dressing ingredients in a bowl and season to taste.

6. To serve: Arrange vegetables on a serving platter; drizzle over dressing.

Green bean, broccoli, mangetout & asparagus platter

Serves 8–10

600g tenderstem broccoli, blanched

400g fine green beans, trimmed, blanched

400g mangetout, blanched

300g asparagus spears, blanched

2–3 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

Salt & milled black pepper

TO SERVE

100g flaked almonds, toasted

100g feta, crumbled

1. Toss all vegetables together in a bowl with a drizzle of olive oil. Season.

2. To serve: Scatter over almonds and feta, and serve.

Bacon-sautéed brussels sprouts

Serves 8–10

3 tbsp olive oil

200g back bacon, chopped

1 red onion, sliced

600g brussels sprouts, blanched & halved

100g pecan nuts, roughly chopped

40g dried cranberries

100g blue cheese, crumbled

Salt & white pepper to taste

1. Heat oil in a pan and fry bacon for 10 minutes until golden and crispy.

2. Add onion and fry until soft, then add sprouts, nuts and cranberries. Season with a little salt and white pepper. Cook on medium-high heat for about 5 minutes until the sprouts are golden.

3. To serve: Transfer to a serving bowl; top with blue cheese and serve warm.



Mini lemon cheesecakes

Makes 10 mini cheesecakes

Baking these in individual ovenproof dishes is a sweet way to personalise your dessert table.

100g tennis biscuits, finely crushed

40g butter, melted

FOR THE CHEESECAKE

500g cream cheese, at room temperature

140g castor sugar

2 tsp vanilla extract

Zest of 1 large lemon

3 tbsp fresh lemon juice

2 extra-large free-range eggs

Fresh raspberries & icing sugar for serving

'MINCE PIE' ICE-CREAM SANDWICHES
RECIPE ON PAGE 106



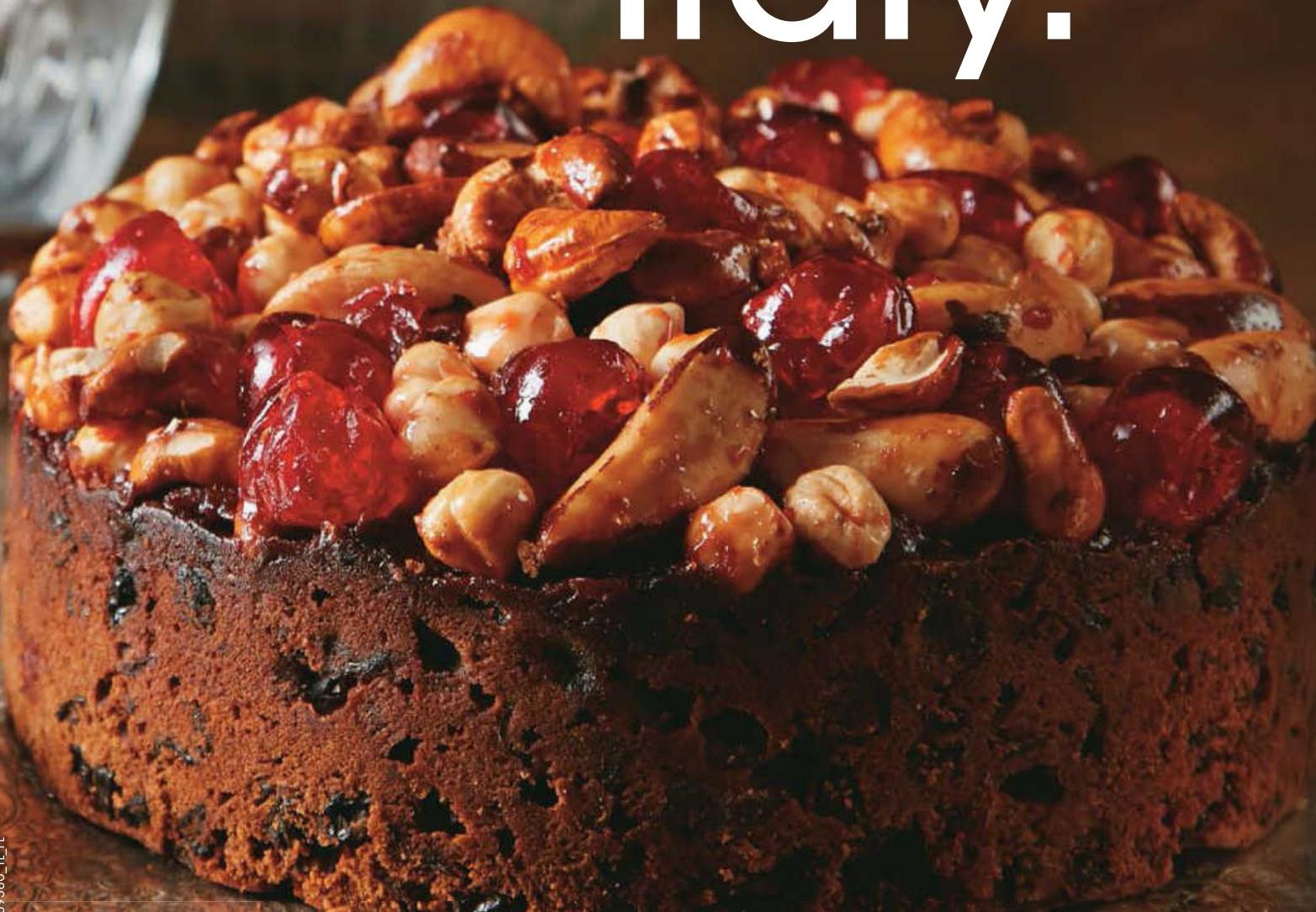
1. Preheat oven to 170°C. Combine the biscuit crumbs with butter – they should resemble damp sea sand.

2. Divide the crumbs between 10 small ovenproof jars or ramekins and gently press them down to compact them so they form a base.

3. Place the cheesecake ingredients (except raspberries and icing sugar) in a bowl and beat until smooth and creamy.

4. Spoon 2–3 tbsp of the mixture into each jar and arrange jars on a roasting tray lined with a tea towel. Fill the

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PEACE OF MIND



BOOZY RASPBERRY & PEACH TRIFLE



DECADENT PANFORTE



roasting tray with warm water until it comes 1cm up the sides.

5. Bake for 15–20 minutes or until the cheesecakes are just set.
6. Remove from oven and leave to cool before serving.
7. **To serve:** Top cheesecakes with raspberries and dust with icing sugar.

Boozy raspberry & peach trifle

Serves 8-10

This classic, comforting sherry trifle has been in our family for generations, and is a festive staple on our Christmas table.

200g good quality raspberry jam
2 x 200g packets sponge finger biscuits (we used Boudoir biscuits)
1 cup sherry
1L fresh custard, preferably homemade
2 x 400g cans peach slices in juice, drained
400g fresh raspberries
1 cup fresh cream, whipped to soft peaks

1. Spread a thin layer of jam on both sides of each sponge finger and arrange on the bottom and around the sides of a serving dish.
2. Drizzle half the sherry over the biscuits and pour 1½ cups of custard over the bottom layer of biscuits. Top with a layer of peaches and raspberries.
3. Add another layer of biscuits and a drizzle of sherry, followed by more custard. Repeat the process until the dish is full.
4. Top with cream and a few raspberries, cover with clingfilm and place in the fridge to chill for at least 4 hours before serving.
5. **To serve:** Serve in bowls with a sprig of mint or a few extra berries.

Moist chocolate fruit cake

Makes a 21cm square cake

This easy-to-make chocolatey cake is lighter and has a much more subtle flavour than fruit cake, and can be made up to a week in advance.

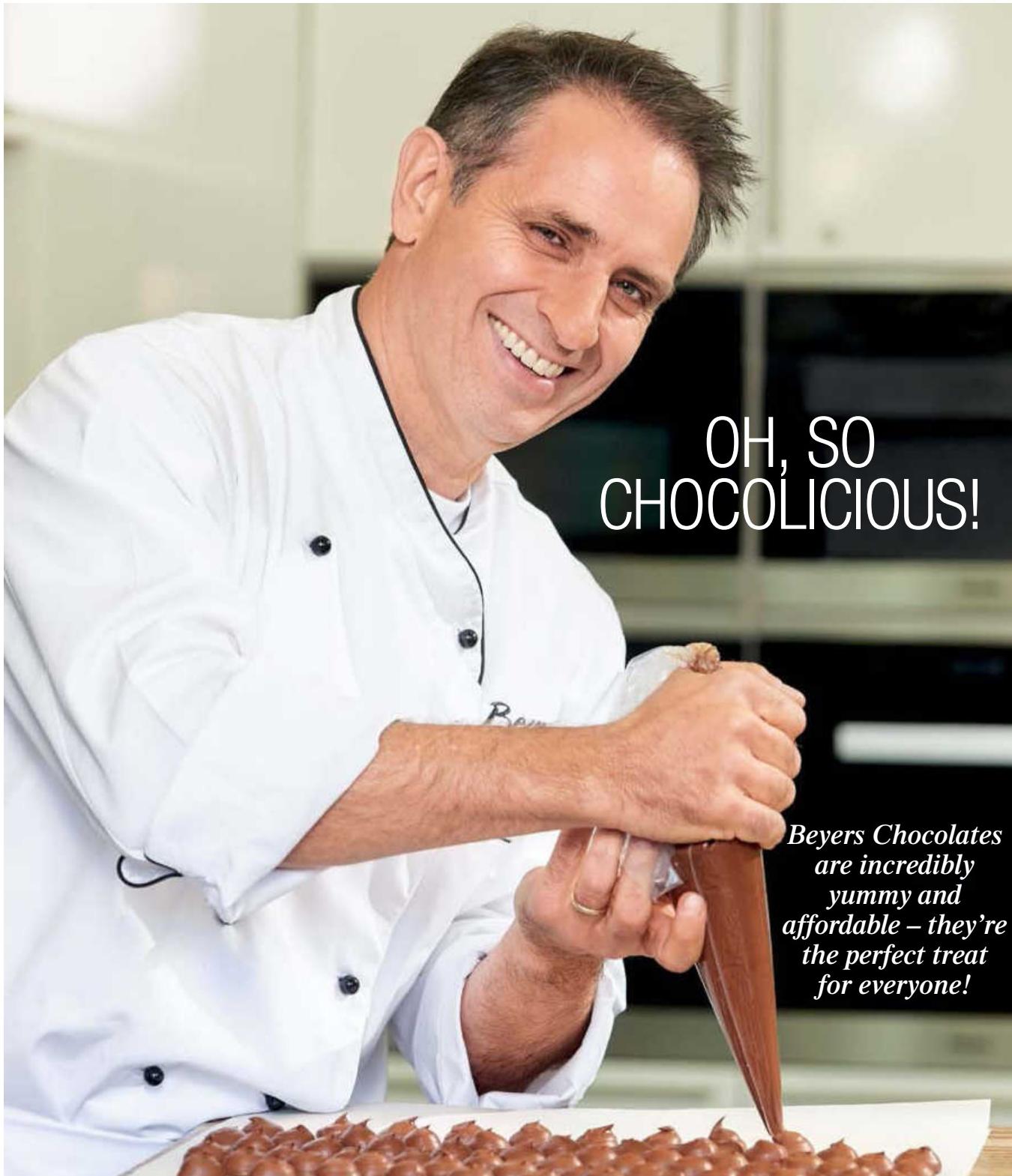
300g fruit cake mix
½ cup sherry, brandy or strong tea
300g butter, softened
250g muscovado sugar (we used Natura Sugar's)
Zest of 1 orange
3 extra-large eggs
50g cocoa powder
1 tsp ground ginger
300g cake flour
2 tsp baking powder
Pinch of salt
100g dark chocolate, chopped
Glacé cherries for decorating
2 tbsp smooth apricot jam for glazing

1. Grease and line a 21cm square cake tin with baking paper.
2. Place the fruit mix and sherry (or brandy or tea) in a bowl and set aside to soak.
3. Preheat the oven to 170°C.
4. Cream together the butter, sugar and orange zest until fluffy and pale, then beat in the eggs one by one until well incorporated. Add the soaked fruit and any remaining liquid to the butter mixture and stir to combine.
5. Sift together the cocoa, ginger, flour, baking powder and salt, and fold into the wet mixture with half of the chocolate until just combined.
6. Scoop the mixture into the prepared cake tin and top with remaining chocolate and the glacé cherries.
7. Bake for 50–60 minutes or until a skewer inserted into the middle comes out clean. Glaze the warm cake with apricot jam.
8. Leave to cool in the tin before slicing into squares and serving.

Decadent panforte

Makes a 21cm round cake

This rich Italian Christmas delicacy hails from Tuscany, where its origins can be traced



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works of edible art. Beyers's Premium and Taster boxes are affordable selections of flavourful chocolates that make the ideal gift – even for the most discerning chocoholic.





VANILLA
BEAN &
FRANGELICO
SHAKES

back to the 1300s. It is really delicious, so no surprise that it's been around for centuries!

1 cup honey
140g demerara sugar (we used the Natura brand)
100g mixed citrus peel
100g each blanched almonds, hazelnuts & shelled pistachio nuts, toasted
200g glacé cherries
100g dried cranberry & raisin mix
150g cake flour
2 tsp ground cinnamon
2 tsp mixed spice
½ tsp nutmeg
Edible gold dust for decoration (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C. Grease and line a 21cm round baking tin with baking paper or foil.
2. Combine honey and sugar in a saucepan and stir over medium heat until the sugar has dissolved. Bring the mixture to a boil and cook for 4 minutes until slightly thickened.
3. Place all the remaining ingredients (except the gold dust) in a large heatproof bowl. Add the hot honey mixture and ¼ cup cold water to the bowl and mix to form a thick dough. (The mixture may be stiff when you first combine it but keep on mixing until it softens and comes together.)
4. Scoop dough into the prepared tin

and bake for about 50 minutes until just set. Note that the cake will not rise – it will have a very dense, firm texture.

5. Remove from the oven; leave to cool completely before removing from the pan.

6. To serve: Sprinkle with gold dust and slice into thin wedges. Serve with coffee.

'Mince pie' ice-cream sandwiches

Makes 10

These cool treats are sure to be a favourite with both young and old members of the family.

1L vanilla ice cream
200g ready-prepared fruit mince (we used Safari)
200g biscuits of your choice (we used Woolworths palmiers)
100g dark chocolate, finely grated

1. Mix the ice cream and the fruit mince until well combined. Place in a freezerproof container and freeze until needed.
2. Sandwich scoops of the ice cream between two biscuits and very gently press together to squeeze the ice cream to the edges of the biscuits. (Don't break the biscuits.)
3. **To serve:** Roll the ice-cream edges in grated chocolate and serve immediately, with napkins.

Vanilla bean & frangelico shakes

Serves 8–10

The perfect end to a busy day!

1L vanilla ice cream
500ml full-cream milk
½ cup frangelico liqueur (optional)
1 tsp vanilla extract

1. Blitz all ingredients in a blender until creamy and well combined.
2. **To serve:** Pour into glasses and serve while it is well chilled. ♣



TRIFLE

- If you are short of fridge space, this trifle can be layered into any serving dish that you'd prefer to use and will fit into your fridge better.
- If you aren't a fan of sherry, feel free to use brandy or, for a non-alcoholic version, the reserved juice from the peaches works very well.
- Make this pudding in advance to save time on the day.

CHRISTMAS CAKE

- If your family is not a fan of fruit cake, substitute the fruit with 100g chopped mixed nuts.
- Christmas cake freezes beautifully: just seal it in an airtight container or zip-sealed bag for up to 2 months.

PANFORTE

- You can make this cake weeks or even a month in advance and keep it in an airtight container until it is needed.
- You can use any of your favourite nuts to make this recipe.
- This cake may seem a bit too firm when it cools, but don't worry – once it's sliced it is fudgy and delicious.

CHEESECAKE

- This mixture may be made into one 20cm cheesecake – just increase the cooking time to 50–60 minutes.
- The cheesecake may be flavoured with a few drops of any essence you like: simply add it with 3 tbsp water instead of the lemon zest and juice.

'MINCE PIE' SANDWICHES

- Shortbread biscuits such as Eet-sum-mores work well in this recipe.
- Feel free to use any flavour ice cream you like to make these to suit your family's tastes.

SWEET & SAVOURY

Whipping up these delectable treats is a cinch if you've got Lancewood premium cottage cheese in the fridge!

The Lancewood premium range of bestselling full cream and low fat cottage cheese is so versatile – it's ideal for baking and cooking both sweet and savoury delights.



COTTAGE CHEESE FLAPJACK AND STRAWBERRY STACK

YOU WILL NEED:

3 large eggs,
250g Lancewood Smooth Plain Cottage Cheese,
1 tsp vanilla essence
2 tbsp castor sugar
¾ cup cake flour
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
Sunflower or canola oil for frying
Golden syrup & fresh berries to serve

1. Combine eggs, cottage cheese, vanilla essence and castor sugar in a bowl. Sift over flour, baking powder and salt and stir until smooth.
2. Heat a little oil in a pan and fry spoonfuls of the batter over a medium heat for about 1 minute on each side until cooked through. Repeat with remaining batter.
3. Serve 3 flapjacks topped with golden syrup and fresh berries.

MOCHA COTTAGE CHEESE PUDDINGS

YOU WILL NEED:

250g Lancewood Full Cream Plain Smooth Cottage Cheese,
2 large eggs
¾ cup flour
½ cup cocoa powder
1 tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
¾ cup sugar
1 cup dark coffee
¼ cup sunflower oil
1 tsp vanilla essence
200g Lancewood Cultured Cream to serve

1. Place cottage cheese, eggs, flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, salt, sugar, dark coffee, sunflower oil and vanilla in a bowl and beat until smooth.
2. Divide mixture between 4 individual ramekins and bake in a bain-marie at 170°C for 25–30 minutes until just set.
3. Serve the puddings warm with a generous dollop of cultured cream.

STUFFED CHICKEN BREASTS

YOU WILL NEED:

250g Lancewood Full Cream Chunky Cottage Cheese with Chives
50g pickled sundried tomatoes, chopped
1 clove garlic
10g basil leaves, roughly chopped
4 chicken breast fillets
Olive oil
Sautéed vegetables to serve
Rocket for garnishing

1. Combine the cottage cheese, sundried tomatoes, garlic and basil together in a bowl and season with salt and milled pepper. Slice a pocket into the side of each chicken breast fillet and fill with 2–3 tbsp of the cheese mixture. Secure the stuffing with a toothpick.
2. Drizzle olive oil over chicken, place onto a roasting tray and cook at 200°C for 30 minutes until golden and cooked through.
3. Serve chicken warm with sautéed vegetables and rocket to garnish.

CREAMY COTTAGE CHEESE, AVOCADO AND HERB DIP

YOU WILL NEED:

250g Lancewood Plain Smooth Cottage Cheese
1 peeled and pitted avocado
1 lemon
½ clove garlic
1 seeded red chilli
Crudités & olives to serve

1. Place all ingredients into a blender and pulse until creamy and smooth.
2. Season with salt and milled black pepper and serve with crudités and olives. ♣



Terrific terrine

Pork terrine is an impressive yet simple dish perfect for a buffet table or even sliced and plated as an elegant summery starter. It's best prepared two to three days ahead to allow the flavours to develop.

PORK TERRINE

SERVES 10

YOU WILL NEED:

15g butter
2 medium-size onions, diced
3 cloves garlic, crushed
500g pork mince
350g pork neck steak, cut into 1cm cubes
2 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
2 tbsp fresh rosemary leaves, chopped
½ tsp white pepper
2 tsp salt
40g green peppercorns, drained
¼ cup white wine (optional)
2 leeks, halved & blanched
8 asparagus spears, blanched
3 bay leaves
600g good quality streaky bacon

Step one

Preheat oven to 180°C. Line a 1L loaf tin with a piece of tin foil large enough to overlap the tin and enclose the terrine once it's ready to bake.

Step two

Melt butter in a frying pan and sauté onions and garlic over a medium heat until golden. Allow to cool, then, in a large bowl, mix with the mince, pork neck, herbs, white pepper, salt, peppercorns and wine (if using). Set aside.



Step three



Arrange bay leaves in the bottom of the tin. Place strips of the bacon lengthways over the leaves and next to each other so they overlap slightly.

Step four

Now arrange more strips horizontally and vertically (make sure the overlaps on all sides of the tin are long enough to enclose the terrine once the filling is in) until all sides are covered. Top with a layer of the blanched leeks.



Step five

Firmly press 1/3 of the mince mixture into the tin and arrange 4 asparagus spears on top. Then repeat the process with another 1/3 of the mixture and the asparagus. Finally top with the remaining mince.



Step six

Firmly compact the mince into the tin and fold the bacon over to enclose the filling. It may look a bit domed at this point, but will cook down in the oven.



Pork is a delicious and satisfying meat, and a rich source of protein and minerals, especially iron, zinc and magnesium. It's also rich in all the B-vitamins, which help us cope with stress. A pork terrine may seem like a complicated recipe, but it is really easy, and in a few simple steps you can create a showstopper to impress any guest. Terrines are also a great way to make the most of a selection of pork products. Try this fabulous pork dish for your friends and family this Christmas – it's sure to become a festive favourite.

tips for cooking your terrine

TIP 1: 3 tbsp brandy mixed with 3 tbsp apricot juice make a delicious substitute for white wine.

TIP 2: Make this recipe in individual baby loaf tins for a delicious starter.

TIP 3: The pork neck steak gives this terrine a lovely country texture and keeps it deliciously moist. If you can't get hold of pork neck steak, pork shoulder is a good substitute.

TIP 4: To check the filling for seasoning before cooking it, cook a little bit of it in a frying pan.

Step seven



Enclose terrine with foil overlaps and seal tightly. Place into a roasting pan filled with water coming 2cm up the sides; bake for 1½–2 hours.

Remove from oven and roasting pan and weigh terrine down with a heavy pot or a brick. Leave to cool.

Step eight

When completely cool, wrap terrine tightly with clingfilm and chill for up to 3 days until needed, or freeze for up to 3 months. ♣

'Make this dish up to four days in advance for fuss-free entertaining; this will free you up to spend time with your family on Christmas Day.'

JUNIOR FOOD EDITOR: PIA-ALEXA DUARTE



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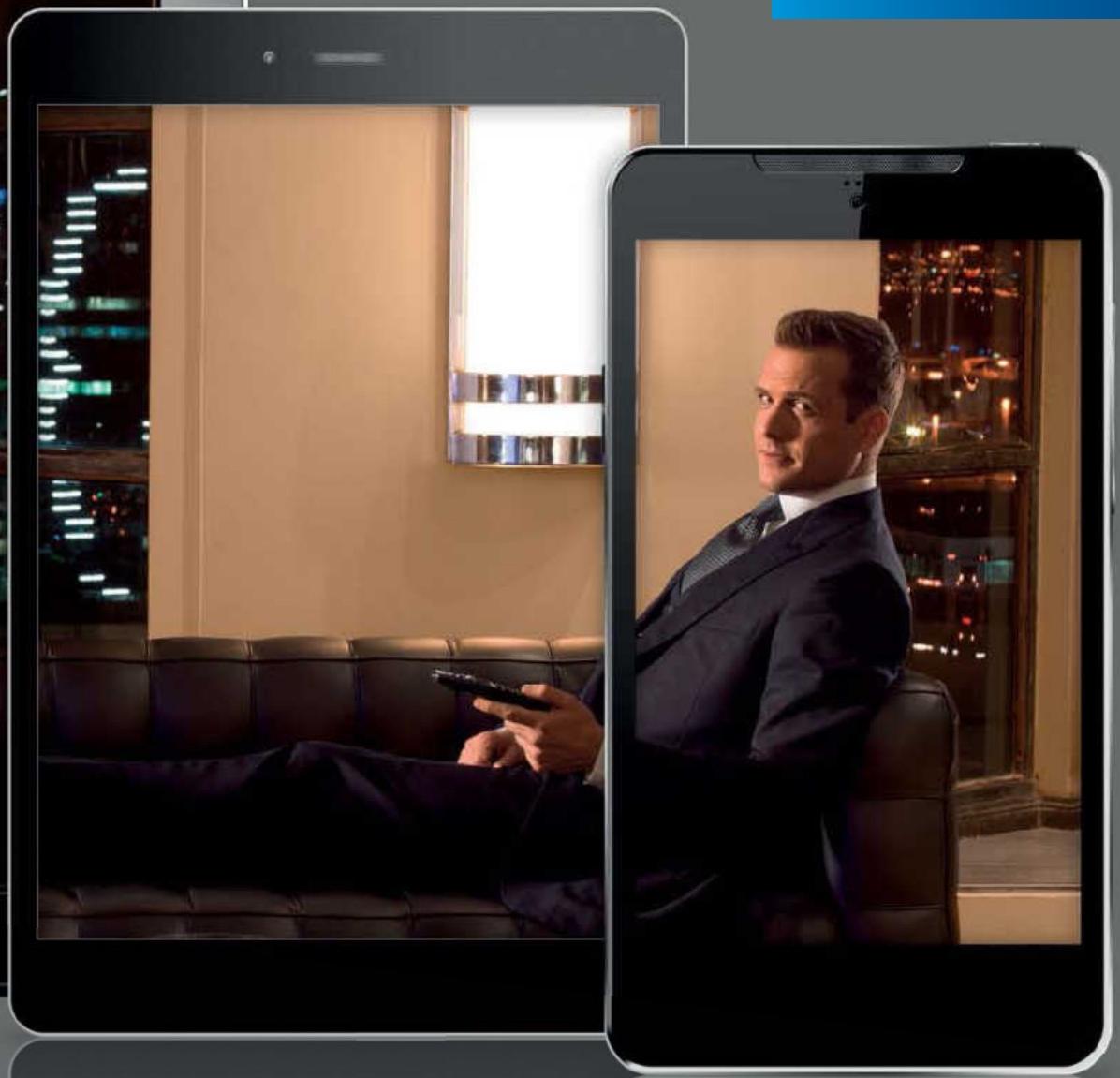
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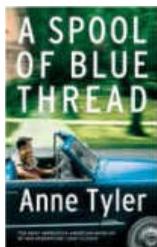
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BOOKS

A Spool of Blue Thread

By Anne Tyler

(Chatto & Windus)



'Can't Leave Until the Dog Dies' is the title of part one. If you're at a particular phase of life, you'll understand instantly. Yes, your parents need to move in with you, or into some sort of facility for the aged, as they're no longer coping on their own. But of course they're none too keen. And the dog is their excuse not to move. The parents in question here are Red and Abby Whitshank. Their children, Amanda, Jeannie and Denny. And Stem, but let's sidestep the spoiler. The strength of Tyler's writing is her economy of words, and her keen observation of interpersonal dynamics – she's very accomplished.

Anna Rich

The Blue Between Sky and Water

By Susan Abulhawa

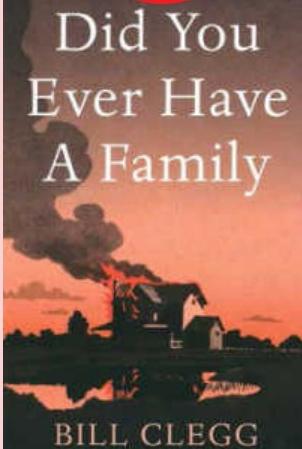
(Bloomsbury)



It's 1947, and the Baraka family are driven out of their home by violent Israeli soldiers. Many of the Baraka men are imprisoned or killed, leaving the women to protect the children and try to earn a living in a refugee camp in Gaza. Nazimiyyeh takes the position of matriarch, keeping the sisters, daughters and granddaughters together. Her brother Mamdouh makes his way to America, and eventually Nur, his granddaughter, returns to Gaza. It's the Palestinian side of the story, told through four generations of women... Powerful.

Sally Kramer

THIS
MONTH
WE
LOVE



Did You Ever Have A Family

By Bill Clegg

(Gallery/Scout Press)

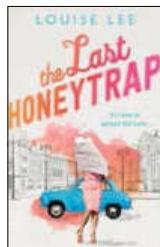
The novel opens with Silas, a pot-smoking teen who is awoken by the sounds of sirens, horns, and 'the oily stench of a fire burning more than just wood'. June Reid's house has gone up in flames – and with it her family: her boyfriend Luke, ex-husband Adam, daughter Lolly and future son-in-law, Will. The small town of Wells simmers with gossip: was it carelessness, a crime of passion, or a result of Luke's alleged criminal inclinations? The only option for grief-stricken June is to drive far away and try to feel close to her daughter in the one place Lolly felt most at peace. Told from various perspectives, the novel tracks the events that led to the fire, and the tiny turns of fate in the lives of several families. Clegg's novel, longlisted for the Man Booker prize, is beautifully conceptualised, unravelling with each chapter to a poignant end.

Sandra Parmee

The Last Honeytrap

By Louise Lee

(Headline)



The first in a three-part series, *The Last Honeytrap* follows PI Florence Love on one of her most challenging cases yet. Her target is one of the nation's

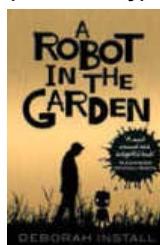
biggest idols, Scott Delaney, a jazz musician with reclusive tendencies and an overprotective entourage. Luckily Florence is a master of body language, evolutionary science and Shorinji Kempo. Not to mention that she's beautiful, resourceful and relentless. An indulgent read with more than a few unexpected turns that had me either gasping or laughing out loud more than once. If you're a Marian Keyes or Jennifer Crusie fan, add this to your reading list at once!

Jana Wessels

A Robot in the Garden

By Deborah Instal

(Doubleday)

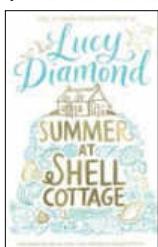


Tang, an adorable, exasperating robot, turns up in Ben's garden one morning. Tang is broken and may not last. As Ben's marriage ends and his wife Amy leaves, Ben decides to find Tang's owner in an effort to repair him. Ben and Tang embark on a trip across the world. Ben cares for the childlike Tang while dealing with the difficulties of having an old-fashioned and oddly emotional robot in a world full of modern androids – with heartwarming and amusing consequences. This is a funny, delightful and touching story that shows us how we can learn to see ourselves differently.

Anita Perks

Summer at Shell Cottage

By Lucy Diamond
(Pan Macmillan)



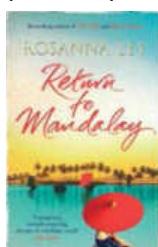
Olivia and Alec Tarrant were on their way to their honeymoon destination when their car broke down and they ended up at the seaside cottage

in Devon. They returned there every summer after that – alone at first, then with their children Freya and Harriet, and later, their grandchildren. But this year, after Alec's sudden death, Olivia isn't sure she wants to go back. It just wouldn't be the same. She eventually decides to go, but a shocking discovery changes her life. And Freya and Harriet have their own problems to contend with... This is a feel-good story about how friends and family can help you through some of life's toughest battles. It's a truly delightful read.

Crystal Matthews

Return to Mandalay

By Rosanna Ley
(Quercus)



Eva Gatsby works as an antique dealer at a company in Bristol. She is asked to go to Burma, now Myanmar, to view some antiques. She jumps at the chance as she grew up listening to her grandfather Lawrence's tales about the place. Before her departure, Lawrence asks her to return a mysterious artefact – an antique chinthe with glowing red eyes – to its rightful owner. The story moves backwards and forwards in time between Lawrence's war years and Eva's business trip. Rich in detail of Burma's history and culture, this story gives insight into the beauty of the country, the teak industry, the nation's discontent and recovery from dictatorship. I enjoyed it. It's a great holiday read.

Sally Kramer

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The Long Utopia

By Terry Pratchett & Stephen Baxter
(Harper)

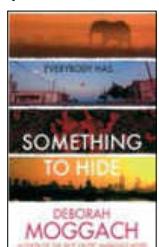


Set in the middle of the 21st century, the concept of the series is that there is an infinite chain of parallel earths existing alongside ours. It's soon discovered that there are natural 'steppers' who don't need 'stepping boxes' to move from one world to another, and they become the pioneers of The Long Earth. Joshua Valiente and Sally Lindsay are two, as are Lobsang and Agnes. There is a threat to The Long Earth, and it will take a huge sacrifice to prevent its destruction. I so enjoyed this; more than the previous two in the series. The intricate, detailed world Baxter and Pratchett have created is so clever. Sadly, book five, due for release in 2016, is the last in the series, as Terry Pratchett died this year.

Anèl van der Merwe

Something to hide

By Deborah Moggach
(Chatto & Windus)



Secrets. Everyone has them. Petra in Pimlico, in her sixties, single and lonely. Li-Jing in China, kept in the dark about her husband's trips to West Africa while she's struggling to deal with their inability to have children. Jeremy and Bev, also in West Africa, happy as can be – according to Bev's regular email updates. And Lorrie in Texas, struggling to make ends meet, and with a husband away in the army for months at time. Their secrets link them all, across the globe, as they deal with infidelity, surrogacy, life in Africa and strange business dealings. This book's twists and turns carry you along, never knowing what you'll find next. An absorbing page-turner.

Anita Perks



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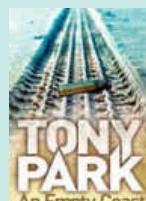
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(Tracey McDonald Publishers) Colouring in is a wonderful way to relax, and these beautiful scenes and designs will give you hours of calming therapy. KEYWORD: CREATIVE



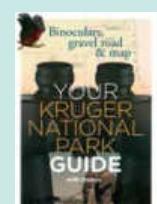
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An Empty Coast by

Tony Park (Pan Macmillan) Emma, a student archaeologist on a dig at the edge of Etosha, discovers a body dating back to the country's war of liberation in the 1980s. KEYWORD: ETOSHA



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by Mariana Esterhuizen (NB Publishers) Recipes from Mariana's Stanford restaurant: popular and classic dishes, as well as her favourite childhood foods. KEYWORD: KITCHEN

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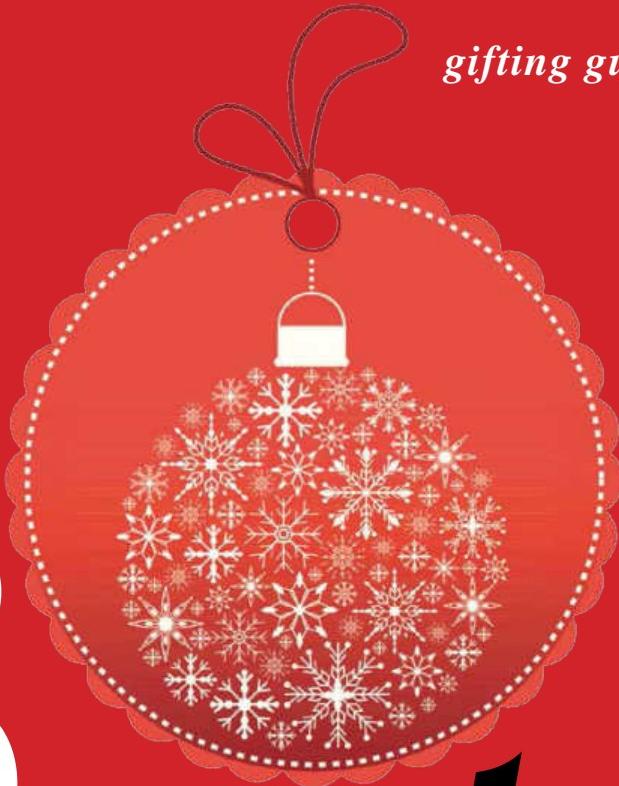
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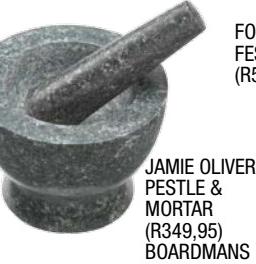
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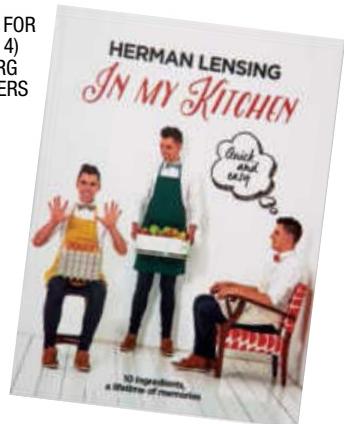
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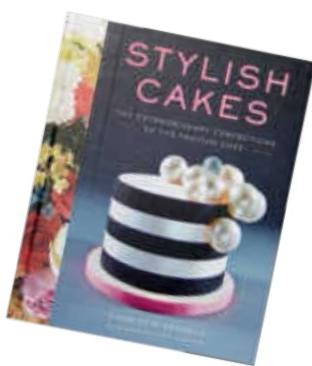
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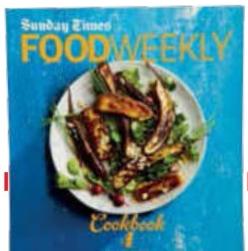
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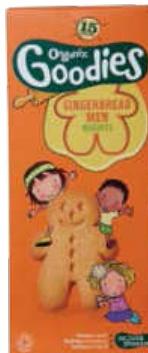


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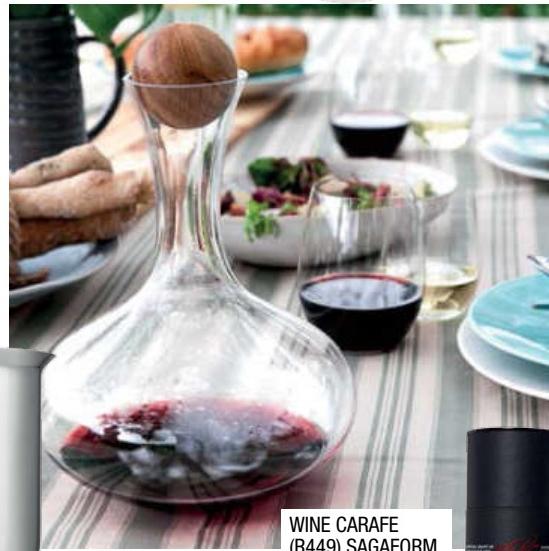
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L'ORMARINS
LITCHI
EAU DE VIE



L'ORMARINS LITCHI
EAU DE VIE 2013 (R239)

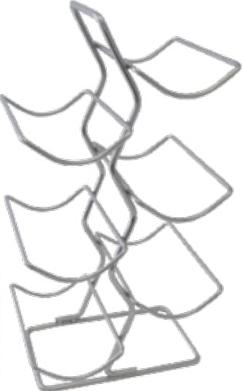


CUT-GLASS
BALON WINE
GLASS (R79,95)
WOOLWORTHS

LOMOND
SAUVIGNON
BLANC 2015
(R70)



KLEINE
ZALZE
FAMILY
RESERVE
CHENIN
BLANC 2013
(R140)



METAL
WINE
RACK
(R99,99)
MR PRICE
HOME



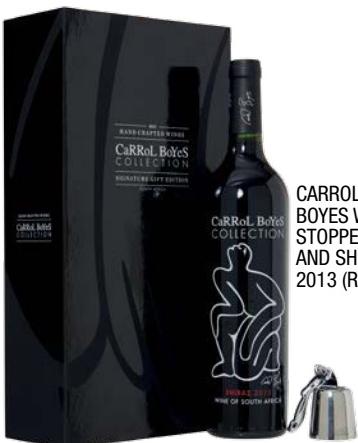
MURATIE BEN PRINS
CAPE VINTAGE PORT
2011 IN CONTAINER
(R175)

BOTTEGA
GIANDUIA
CHOCOLATE &
GRAPPA LIQUEUR
(R220 FOR
500ML)



COPPER HIP
FLASK (R199)
WOOLWORTHS





CARROL BOYES WINE STOPPER AND SHIRAZ 2013 (R410)



STEMLESS WINE GLASS (R329 FOR 2) RIEDEL, YUPPIECHEF.COM

PONGRÁCZ DESIDERIUS 2008 (R375)



DRINK DISPENSER (R349) AQUA HOMEWARE, YUPPIECHEF.COM



LEVER-ARM OPENER (R1 300) LE CREUSET, YUPPIECHEF.COM



CREATION 2014 RESERVE PINOT NOIR (R305)



CUT-GLASS BALON WINE GLASS (R79,95) WOOLWORTHS



UITKYK CHENIN BLANC 2013 (R89)



OUTDOOR GLASS (R79) GUZZINI, YUPPIECHEF.COM



THREE SHIPS BOURBON CASK FINISH WHISKY (R200)

NEDERBURG GIFT PACK: THE MOTORCYCLE MARVEL RHÔNE-STYLE BLEND 2013 AND ANCHORMAN CHENIN BLANC 2014 (R280)



PITCHER (R299) HUMBLE & MASH, YUPPIECHEF.COM



LUSTRE WINE GLASSES (R69,95 EACH) WOOLWORTHS



INVERROCHE GIN CLASSIC (R270)



WINE GIFT SET (R359) METROKANE, YUPPIECHEF.COM



BAIN'S SINGLE GRAIN CAPE MOUNTAIN WHISKY (R250)



BADSBERG CELLAR NOBLE LATE HARVEST (R70)

STORMHOEK CLIPPER GIFT PACK (R99 FOR 3 BOTTLES), CHECKERS



NEETHLINGSHOF 2014 PINOTAGE (R99)



LAGUNA BOTTLE (R519) BOHEMIA CRYSTAL, YUPPIECHEF.COM



BOTTLED UP GIFT PACK (R199,99) TYPO



JC LE ROUX SCINTILLA 2009 (R190)



LADISMITH KLEIN KAROO BRANDY (R395)



GRANDE PROVENCE PINOT NOIR 2014 (R120)



CRYSTAL WINE GLASSES (R249,99 FOR 4) MR PRICE HOME



DROSTDY-HOF ADELPRACHT 2014 (R50)

gifting!

Home

BY LIESL ROBERTSON

This month, we went shopping for gifts – and we found something pretty for everyone you know!



LIPSTICK CUPS (R295 FOR 2) PRESTWICH COLLECTION



FLORAL PLANNER (R495) IN GOOD COMPANY



40X40CM PALM LEAF CHAIRPADS (R89,99 EACH) MR PRICE HOME



TABLE CANDLES (R89,95 FOR 6) WOOLWORTHS



CURVATURE LAMP IN WHITE (R950) PRESTWICH COLLECTION



ROUND TOWEL (R349) COTTON ON

AFRICA HEART LIGHT (R749) CERAMIC FACTORY



SEAGRASS STORAGE (R599 FOR SET OF TWO – MEDIUM AND LARGE) @HOME



DOT DASH BOX SET (R1 999) HEMMA @ SUPERBALIST



CLOVER MIRRORS (R699 FOR SET OF 3) @HOME



CHRISTMAS GOLD DOT DINNER PLATE (R79,95) SIDE PLATE (R69,95) AND CEREAL BOWL (R69,95) WOOLWORTHS



ENCHANTED FOREST COLOURING BOOK (R299) JOHANNA BASFORD @ SUPERBALIST



REINDEER NOVELTY PLANTER (R89,99) WOOLWORTHS



GLITTER TWIG WREATH (R450) WOOLWORTHS



QUOTE CANDLE (R199) TYPO



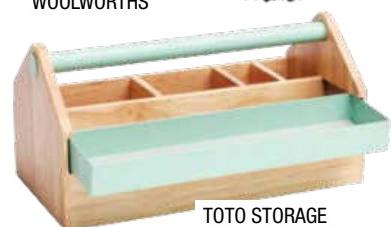
WATERMELON BATH MAT (R329,99) TYPO



GREEN SPRIGS NAPKINS (R240 FOR 2) HANDMADE BY ME



SUGAR BOWL & MILK JUG SET (R399) PAUSE ROOM @ SUPERBALIST



TOTO STORAGE BOX (R499) UMBRA @ SUPERBALIST



gifting

COMPILED BY JANA WESSELS & KIRSTIN GERBER

Garden

Channel your inner Suzelle this month with a DIY Christmas wreath. PLUS we help you create an enviable gardening wishlist to send off to Santa!



FLOATING FLAMINGO DRINK HOLDERS (R129 EACH) COTTON ON



GARDENA CLASSIC SECATEURS (R249,95)



METAL PLANT POT (R149) H&M



GROWING PAPER GIFT TAGS (R10 EACH)
WWW.GROWINGPAPER.CO.ZA



CRABTREE & EVELYN GARDENER'S HAND THERAPY CHRISTMAS SET (R290)



MOLESKINE GARDENING JOURNAL (R270) JUSTMOLESKINE.CO.ZA



Gardening Journal
Carine Lardage



FACE PLANTERS (R399,99 EACH) TYPO

TRADITIONAL CHECK PICNIC BLANKET (R249,95) BOARDMANS



HUNTER ORIGINAL GLOSS SHORT BOOTS (R2150) WWW.HUNTERBOOTS.CO.ZA



WATERING CAN (R365) IN GOOD COMPANY



WOODEN POT (R199) H&M



WEBER MASTERTOUCH IN CRIMSON (R3999)
WWW.WEBER.CO.ZA



TEALIGHT LANTERN (R229) H&M



GLASS TERRARIUM (R399,99) TYPO

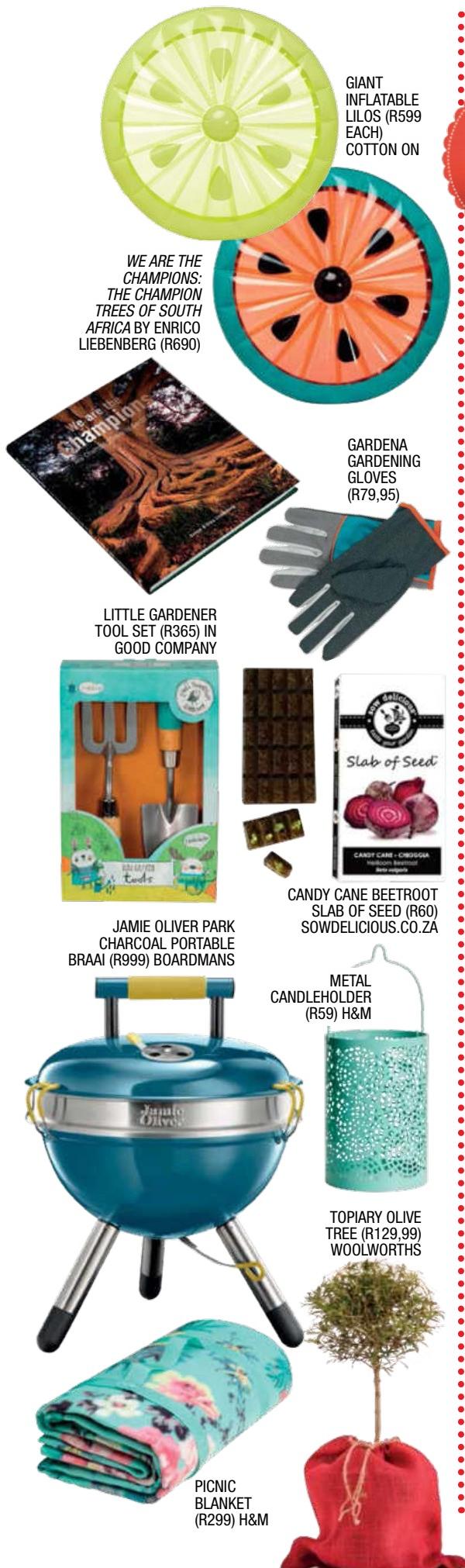


THE SECRET GARDEN COLOURING BOOK BY JOHANNA BASFORD (R299) SUPERBALIST



HERB PLANTERS (R430 EACH) LE CREUSET

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANEL VAN DER MERWE, SUPPLIED





How to make a **CHRISTMAS WREATH**

Florist Fennec Deuchar from Fox & Co shows us how to create an easy Christmas wreath, inspired by the minimalist trend and South African summer colours.

STEP 1 Create a round frame with thick floristry wire by moulding it around the base of a medium bucket. Loop twice and secure the two circles with extra wire.



WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

FLOWERS Ericas, a protea or banksia, Port Jackson flowers and leaves, wheat, fynbos flowers like pincushions, and any other greenery in your garden or from a florist that will dry in a good condition.



TOOLS Thick floristry wire, thin floristry wire, secateurs, glue gun and glue, feathers and ribbon of your choice.



STEP 2 Create small bouquets with the ericas and secure to the frame with thin floristry wire.



STEP 3 Secure the banksia with thin floristry wire to the bottom of the frame.



STEP 4 Create small bouquets with wheat and pincushions of various sizes and secure them with wire to the bottom of the frame.



STEP 5 Wire in the Port Jackson flowers. Use a glue gun to add a few guineafowl feathers. Stand back; wherever you notice open spots that need filling or if you prefer a fuller look, add in ericas, wheat or greenery. Hang the wreath as is on your front door, or add a pretty ribbon. The flowers will dry beautifully without fading or dying off.

BY FASHION EDITOR CARA-LEE RUDITZKY
& BEAUTY EDITOR KELLI CLIFTON

gifting

Fashion

LEATHER NIKKI BAG
(R2 600) THALIA STRATES,
PRESTWICH COLLECTION



CUBIC ZIRCONIA GOLD-PLATED
AIDA CUFF (R755) GORJANA,
PRESTWICH COLLECTION



BATHROBE
(R280)
WOOLWORTHS



GOLD-PLATED
FLAVIA
NECKPIECE
WITH BEADS
(R2 430)
HENRIETTE
BOTH, PRESTWICH
COLLECTION



GHD
PLATINUM
LIMITED
EDITION
WHITE
STYLER
GIFT SET
(R2 999)



OVERNIGHT
BAG (R299)
COTTON ON



WRISTWATCH
(R1 999)
FOSSIL



TOILETRY BAG
(R899) TRENEY,
WOOLWORTHS



SORBET
SENSUAL
THE ROYAL
SPOIL GIFT
SET (R300)

KARL LAGERFELD
PRIVATE KLUB FOR
HIM EDP (R895
FOR 100ML)



AZZARO POUR ELLE
EDP (R745 FOR 75ML)



OSCAR DE
LA RENTA
ESPRIT
D'OSCAR
EDP (R995
FOR
50ML)



TORTOISESHELL
SUNGGLASSES (R2 770) DOLCE
& GABBANA, SUNGLASS HUT



TOTE (R695)
TOSONI, SPITZ



9CT ROSE GOLD, BRAZILIAN GARNET,
SMOKY QUARTZ AND DIAMOND
BRACELET (R15 999) ARTHUR KAPLAN



BONAFIDE
BEARDS OIL
(R190)



KIEHL'S X PETER MAX
COLLECTION CREME DE
CORPS WHIPPED BODY
BUTTER (R685)



THE BODY
SHOP
CRANBERRY
BODY
BUTTER
(R160)

LIMITED EDITION
DIOR GOLDEN
LIGHT COMPACT
POWDER IN
LUXURIOUS BEIGE
(R1 150)



MEN'S
SOCKS (R34
A PAIR)
UNDEEZ
ONLINE



CLARINS
EAU DES
JARDINS
SMOOTHING
BODY
CREAM (R510)



MEN'S
OVERNIGHT
BAG (R5 699,95)
TED BAKER,
STUTTAFFORDS



BURBERRY
BRIT
RHYTHM
FOR MEN
GIFT SET
(R1 010)



DUNHILL
DESIRE
SILVER EDT
(R945 FOR
100ML)



SILVER NECKPIECE
(R699) AND
CRYSTAL
PENDANT (R899)
MIGLIO



Pets

CHRISTMAS
SANTA HAT
(FROM R85)
WWW.DOGSLIFE.CO.ZA

ECOPET
CAT STAR
(R29) WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA

PET SOFA
(R1 899)
WWW.DONNAFOX.CO.ZA

MEOW CAT-FOOD
PLACE MAT (R19,99)
MR PRICE HOME

BECOFAMILY ARETHA THE
ALLIGATOR (R215) WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



NYLABONE DURACHEW
BALL (FROM R190)
WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



DOG'S TUG A BALL,
(R24,99) THE
CRAZY STORE



6CM TANGLED
RUBBER BALL
(R39,99)

THE CRAZY STORE

BUBBLE BOWL IN
17 FUNKY DESIGNS
(FROM R95,25)
WWW.ROGZ.CO.ZA

BUDGET ECO-COMFY MATS
(FROM R158)
WWW.RUFFRAFFPETPRODUCTS.CO.ZA



NYLABONE DURACHEW
HOLLOW STICK
(FROM R199) WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



HILL'S IDEAL
BALANCE
SOFT-BAKED
NATURALS
DOG TREAT
(R55 FOR 227G)
VETS &
VETSHOPS

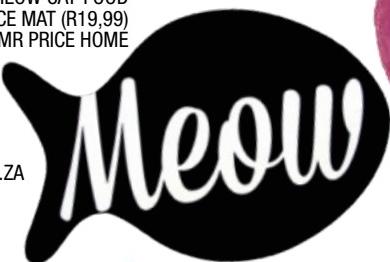


PUFFY LOUNGER
(FROM R203)
WWW.RUFFRAFFPETPRODUCTS.CO.ZA

RFO IN FIVE COLOURS
(R120,05)
WWW.ROGZ.CO.ZA



BOZ DOG'S BALLS
(SMALL R226,50;
LARGE R339,50) WWW.ABSOLUTEPETS.COM

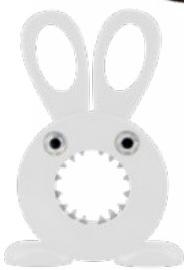


TAPE DISPENSER
(R249,95)
WWW.PYLONES.CO.ZA



SOAP DISH (R149,95)
WWW.PYLONES.CO.ZA

SANTA'S LITTLE
HELPER TEE
(R110)
WWW.DOGSLIFE.CO.ZA



EGG
CUTTER
(R199,95)
WWW.PYLONES.CO.ZA



PET CAM
(R1 790) WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA

MEDOR DOG
SPRAY BOTTLE
(FROM R399,95)
WWW.PYLONES.CO.ZA



HAPPY CAT PILLOW TOY (R88)
WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



QUILTED PET
MAT (R179,99)
THE CRAZY
STORE



ANTBEATER ECO PET
BOWL IN TWO SIZES
(FROM R199) WWW.ABSOLUTEPESTS.COM



SPONGE HOLDER
(R249,95)
WWW.PYLONES.CO.ZA



METAL ID TAG
IN 18 DESIGNS
(FROM R55,90)
WWW.ROGZ.CO.ZA

BUSY BUDDY
JACK TREAT RING
(FROM R130)
WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



PET PLACE
MAT (R19,99)
MR PRICE HOME



DOG AND CAT
FOOD STORAGE
TINS (R159,99
EACH) MR PRICE
HOME



PET SANTA SUIT
(R149,99) MR PRICE HOME



JENNY MORRIS/VONDI'S
COCONUT OIL DOG BISCUITS
(R20) WWW.VONDIS.CO.ZA



BECOBONE TREAT
DISPENSING BONE (R195)
WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



NOOKIE
BAGS (FROM
R130) WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



FANCY DRESS
DOG COLLAR
IN 18 DESIGNS
(FROM R49,75)
WWW.ROGZ.CO.ZA



REFLECTOCAT COLLAR IN THREE
REFLECTIVE DESIGNS (FROM R49,85)
WWW.ROGZ.CO.ZA



CLAM SHELL
(R195) PLASTICS
FOR AFRICA



RICKY LITCHFIELD
GOOD DOG TREATS
(FROM R55,00)
VETS & PET
SHOPS



ELF TEE IN
A VARIETY
OF SIZES
(R170)
WWW.DOGSLIFE.CO.ZA



RUFF PUPP
ROUND DOG
BEDS (FROM R210)
WWW.RUFFRAFFPETPRODUCTS.CO.ZA



MULTIFUNCTION
ALARM CLOCK
(FROM R299,95)
WWW.PYLONES.CO.ZA



PET BED
(R99,99)
THE CRAZY
STORE



HAPPY CAT
MOUSE TOY (R88)
WWW.SHINGAVET.CO.ZA



WOOF
DOG-FOOD
PLACE MAT
(R19,99)
MR PRICE
HOME



HILL'S PRESCRIPTION DIET METABOLIC TREATS
(FELINE R45 FOR 70G; CANINE R69 FOR 220G)
FROM VETS & VETSHOPS



12 DAYS of CHRISTMAS



Win a KitchenAid Artisan Stand Mixer worth R7990!



Iconic design, a 95-year heritage... it's the ultimate kitchen accessory! The original planetary action is powered by a direct drive, gear-driven motor. Optional accessories turn the Mixer into a pasta cutter, citrus juicer or ice cream maker.

Keyword: **KITCHENAID**

Win a R3000 Red Square Gift Card!



Indulge in a luxe signature fragrance from Red Square this festive season – perhaps one of these from the Michael Kors Gold Fragrance Collection? Shop online at www.redsquare.co.za to get it delivered to your door – gift-wrapped too!

Keyword: **REDSQUARE**

WIN one of six mouthwatering Beyers hampers – each valued at R500!



For nearly 30 years, Beyers Chocolates has been handcrafting the very best chocolates. Each hamper contains the Art of Chocolate Collection (three boxes), Chocolatier's Truffle Collection and ten decadent slabs.

Keyword: **BEYERS**

Win Lipault handbags worth R3000!



The new Parisian chic Lipault range of colourful, stylish handbags will transform one lucky winner's wardrobe. On trend and hardwearing, these gorgeous totes are sure to become her favourite wardrobe staples! More info: (031) 266 0620

Keyword: **HANDBAGS**

WIN a Selena Bedroom Couture Collection set with Boardmans, worth over R2800!



Glam up your bedroom with this romantic, aqua-inspired collection that dreams are made of. The full set consists of a queen size duvet cover set, matching quilted throw and three gorgeous scatter cushions. www.boardmans.co.za

Keyword: **BOARDMANS**

WIN a Clarins pamper pack worth R3495!



This fab hamper includes: Body Shaping Cream, Super Restorative Remodelling Serum, Sun Care Milk-Lotion Spray SPF 50, Eye Quartet mineral palette in 12 Skin Tones and Blush Prodige in 07 Tawny Pink.

Keyword: **CLARINS**

On the first day of Christmas my true love gave to me... It's the festive season and we're giving away amazing prizes to our readers. Don't miss out – enter now!

How to enter

SMS the keyword of the prize you're after, plus your full name, physical and/or postal address and email addresses to 37174. SMSes cost R1,50. Free SMSes don't apply. Or visit www.fairlady.com to enter online. **CLOSING DATE:** 31 December 2015. For rules, see page 145.



WIN a La Prairie Sun Care hamper worth R3570!



The new wave of protective skincare for women and men. It safeguards your skin from damaging UVA and UVB rays with highly effective filters, and offers a 'second line of defense' with detoxifying antioxidants.

Keyword: **LAPRAIRIE**



Win a Whirlpool JetChef Microwave Oven to the value of R4500!

One lucky reader will get to experience the future of home appliances.



Whirlpool appliances are intuitive and easy to use; thanks to **6th SENSE** technology, the JetChef's built-in expertise provides a perfectly crisped pizza in 8 minutes! More info: www.whirlpool.co.za

Keyword: **WHIRLPOOL**



Win a R3000 Edgars fashion voucher!



Add a touch of glamour to your festive season with Edgars. Turn heads in embellished party dresses, on-trend metallic accessories and even a new pair of glitzy heels from the wide variety of brands in-store!

Keyword: **EDGARS**



WIN an Alaïa hamper worth R3080!



Alaïa Paris is the first feminine fragrance by Azzedine Alaïa. The acclaimed designer was inspired by his Tunisian childhood, and the fragrance is a declaration of his devotion to women. Leather, pink pepper, freesia, peony and musk notes create a musky, wood-based blend.

Keyword: **ALAÏA**



WIN a luxe LANCÔME hamper worth R3044!



Spoil yourself this Christmas, courtesy of Lancôme. Our gift to you consists of the La Vie Est Belle L'Absolu EDP, Hypnôse Volume-à-porter mascara and the Advanced Génifique Youth Activating Concentrate.

Keyword: **LANCOME**



WIN Lipault luggage worth R3000!



Fresh off the boat from Paris, the Lipault range of luggage and handbags is the epitome of style. Lipault creations are creative, with trendy colours and supple, soft yet hardwearing materials in subdued nylon or striking vinyl.

Keyword: **LUGGAGE**

YOUR



Nothing spells Christmas quite like a festive table with a gorgeous honey-gold gammon or roast duck taking centre stage. We test the best for you...

GAMMONS

Boneless Gammons



READY TO COOK MEDIUM GAMMON

About R69,99/kg; Woolworths

Looks good. It was baked in the net, which comes off easily after cooking.



The texture is good and it has a strong flavour, which we loved. It carved beautifully.



DRY CURED GAMMON WITH PINEAPPLE AND CRANBERRY GLAZE

About R139,99/kg; Woolworths



Has a pineapple and cherry garnish, and a glaze to add. We felt it looked festive. A good flavour, but chewy texture.



BONELESS GAMMON

About R72,99/kg; Checkers & Checkers Hyper



We found the net very tricky to remove – it was really embedded in the meat. Was easy to carve. We felt the texture was rather spongy and the gammon didn't have much flavour.



MARKETSIDE BONELESS GAMMON

Between R64,99 and R69,99/kg; Game



Looks good; nice shape. The net was easy to remove. It carved really easily. We found the texture chewy but fairly moist. Some tasters were not keen on the flavour.

CHRISTMAS shopping guide



READY TO COOK LARGE GAMMON

About R69,99/kg; Woolworths
A really good shape; it carved easily. It was very tender and moist with a good flavour. There was a rather thick fatty

layer under the skin. The colour of the meat was fairly pale.



UNCOOKED BONELESS GAMMON

About R72,99/kg; Pick n Pay
We felt this looked more like roast pork. The net is easy to remove after boiling. The gammon sliced well. We felt it tasted very mild without the traditional gammon or smoky flavour.



BONELESS GAMMON EASY CARVE

About R79,99/kg; Checkers & Checkers Hyper
The meat's been processed into a round shape, so really easy to slice. We thought the colour unnaturally dark. Very tender and moist.



MAPLE FLAVOURED EASY CARVE GAMMON

About R79,99/kg; Checkers, Checkers Hyper
Shaped for easy carving; we felt it looked unnatural but it did the trick. Tasters were divided as to whether they liked the maple flavour. Some found the texture a little jelly-like.



Bone-in Gammons



ROAST SMOKED BONE-IN GAMMON

R59,99/kg; Checkers & Checkers Hyper
This must be boiled on the stovetop. It's in a net, so held its shape. Very easy to carve. The meat was really moist but we felt it had a slightly synthetic, processed flavour.



TRADITIONAL BEECH SMOKED BONE-IN GAMMON

R54,99/kg; Woolworths
Going by instructions, this +6kg gammon should bake about 7 hours, but 5½ hours in, it was overcooked and burnt. It fell apart. We loved the taste. We felt it could bake for 7 hours at a lower temp.



Cooked Gammons



READY TO EAT SMOKED BEECH WOOD GAMMON

About R139,99/kg; Woolworths
We loved this. Big, and a good shape. The bone makes carving a little tricky. Excellent flavour; tender and moist.



READY TO EAT SLICED & SMOKED GAMMON

About R189,99/kg; Woolworths
This gammon comes thinly sliced, which is really convenient. We thought it would be dry but it was moist and soft. We really enjoyed the flavour.



DUCK



BROODER AND JONES DUCK

From R59,99 (price varies per province); Checkers



Frozen, with giblets; defrost before cooking. We felt the recommended cooking time could be reduced; it fell apart. The meat was fairly dark but very tender. Delicious, but lacked seasoning.



FROZEN WHOLE DUCK

About R89,95/kg; Woolworths

This duck had a lovely golden colour after cooking, but the skin was not crisp. The meat was slightly tough and we felt the cooking time could be extended to soften the meat. It was really delicious and juicy.



FROZEN SAVOURY HERB STUFFED DUCK

About R149,95/kg; Woolworths

Deboned and stuffed. Kept its shape well, carved easily. Succulent and moist. We felt it lacked seasoning and felt it should be cooked on a trivet to separate it from fat/juices rendered in cooking.



EXOTIC MUSHROOM AND TRUFFLE DUCK ROULADE

About R149,99/kg; Woolworths
Deboned, lined with chicken breast. Mushroom stuffing. Carves very well. We felt it lacked seasoning and should be cooked on a trivet. Tasters failed to pick up the flavour of the duck.



Go online for the complete survey
with all the other products we tested.

CHRISTMAS PUDDINGS



LUXURY CHRISTMAS PUDDING (900g)



About R159,99; Pick n Pay

Our tasters loved the look and flavour. The base is decorated with loads of almonds and cherries. It is fairly spicy and moist. The inside is full of fruit and whole pecan nuts.



BRANDY CHRISTMAS PUDDING (450g)

About R84,95; Woolworths

This has a lovely tang, which we thought was probably orange. It didn't seem as sweet as some of the others we tasted. The fruit is plump and juicy, with lots of flavour.



RICH CHRISTMAS PUDDING (900g)

About R129,99; Pick n Pay

Most of our tasters enjoyed this pudding, but some did find it a little 'cakey'. It has a very pleasant flavour. It is also available in 450g and 100g sizes.



FRUIT PUDDING (450g)

About 74,95; Woolworths

This pudding unmoulds easily and has a very glossy look. Our tasters picked up a slightly bitter orange flavour which they felt was a little strong. The fruit is very visible.



FESTIVE CHRISTMAS PUDDING (900g)

About R59,99; Checkers

This unmoulded easily after heating it in the microwave. Very cakey; some felt it was more like a sticky toffee pudding. Ideal if you don't like traditional Christmas pudding.



CHRISTMAS PUDDING (450g)

About R49,99 from Food Lover's

This pudding broke up a bit when we turned it out of the mould. It was still moist. Our tasters thought it had a rather synthetic caramelised flavour.



CRACKERS

Luxury



CHECKERS LUXURY CHRISTMAS CRACKERS (6)

About R149,99

These would be beautiful on any table. They required some effort to pull but gave a good bang and had a great selection of gifts. They're good value for money.



family



PNP CHRISTMAS CRACKERS (8)

About R99

These affordable crackers give your table a festive look. We liked the gifts, suitable for adults and kids. Sturdy and easy to pull, but not all of them gave a bang. A great inexpensive choice.



something different

CRACKERTOA (6)

R120 Game

If you're looking for something unusual and fun, don't miss out on these confetti-filled party crackers. They're easy to pull – but expect a mess of confetti. They are beautifully presented and look festive.



ST NICHOLAS LUXURY CHRISTMAS CRACKERS (6)

About R179 from Makro

Red crackers set the perfect festive mood. These were easy to pull and gave a good bang, although one of the six didn't bang. We found the selection of gifts quite nice and the quality, impressive. Definitely worth the spend.



FESTIVE CHRISTMAS CRACKERS (12)

About R150; Woolworths

Colourful and attractive, these festive crackers will look lovely on the table. They offer an interesting selection of gifts for kids. The crackers were easy to pull and gave a nice bang. A great budget buy.



'SELFIE' CRACKERS (6)

About R99,99; Checkers

The whole family will love these fun-filled selfie crackers; they're perfect for those who like a good laugh. Each cracker contains a Christmas prop, a gift and a joke. They pulled easily and all banged. The gifts are suited to both adults and kids.



All FAIRLADY Consumer Test House products are tested in the manner in which a regular consumer would use these items, in order to approximate our readers' experience as closely as possible. Consumer Test House products are not tested by the SABS, the CSIR or any other South African scientific testing body unless otherwise stated. Prices correct at time of going to print.



Save R50

Validate the **voucher code FALDY**
during the checkout process
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During the month of February we will be all about Home and Food, and you can take your pick from various events and happenings hosted by your favourite magazines in Gauteng and Cape Town.

That's right:

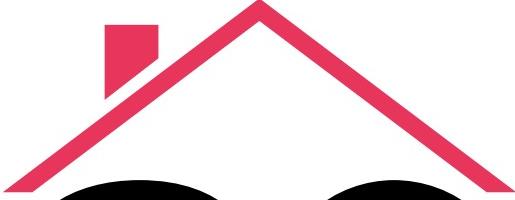
- 30 days of food & drink
- 30 days of ideas & inspiration
- 30 days of celebration & celebrities
- 30 days of giveaways & promotions
- 30 days of shopping & discounts

The February countdown culminates in a fabulous 30 Days of Home + Food live weekend and you are invited to come and meet your favourite magazine team and experience the pages of our magazines coming to life in front of your very eyes.

buy your tickets now!

R150 per person for either a morning or an afternoon session
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INTRODUCING



30 DAYS of **HOME FOOD**

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



Friday 4 March 2016
– Sunday 6 March 2016
Gallagher Convention Centre,
Midrand



The biggest, most exciting and inspiring magazine event to hit our shores, hosted by South Africa's leading women's magazines.

SARIE FAIRLADY TRUELOVE **SARIE**
idees|ideas Kuier Move!
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the people

- Bobby & Karlien van Jaarsveld
- Suzelle DIY
- Marc Lottering
- Pete Goffe-Wood
- Anele Mdoda
- Vuyo Dabula
- Cass Abrahams
- Shaleen Surtie-Richards
- Rebecca Malope
- Deon DIY

the line-up

- Cooking demos with your favourite food eds and celebs
- Style sessions and trend talks
- Craft and DIY
- Meet the people behind your favourite magazines in their reader lounges
- Shop the show at the curated *Ideas* trunk show, the cooks and books stand and various other pop-up event pods
- Indulge in gourmet food
- Stock up on LCHF products at the banting market
- Sip a glass of MCC at the Graham Beck Wine Bar
- Gift bag for each reader

30
DAYS
of HOME
+ FOOD

FEB | MAR 2016

DON'T MISS IT!

the *fabulous* **SUZELLE DIY**

will demonstrate a few great tips to DIY and simplify your life. Don't miss this chance to meet one of our funniest and most creative stars!

PHOTOGRAPHS: ANËL VAN DER MIERWE, SUPPLIED



WHEN:
Friday to Sunday
4–6 March 2016
WHERE:
Gallagher Estate,
Midrand in Jhb

- Visit us at our electricity-free lounge (we thought we'd beat Eskom to it) for a chat, to relax, pick up a few solar ideas or play a board game.
- Buy your tickets* in advance for only R150 from www.30days.co.za and choose to attend the morning or the afternoon session.
- Suzelle DIY Demo times: 12pm and 17.30pm each day



* TICKETS NEEDS TO BE BOUGHT IN ADVANCE. NO TICKETS AVAILABLE ON THE DAY.

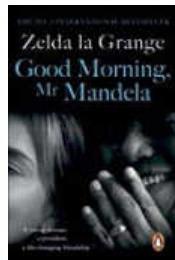
MegaXword

COMPILED BY CHRISTINE LOVATT

The senders of the first four correct MegaXword entries drawn will each win a hamper from Penguin Random House South Africa worth R755!

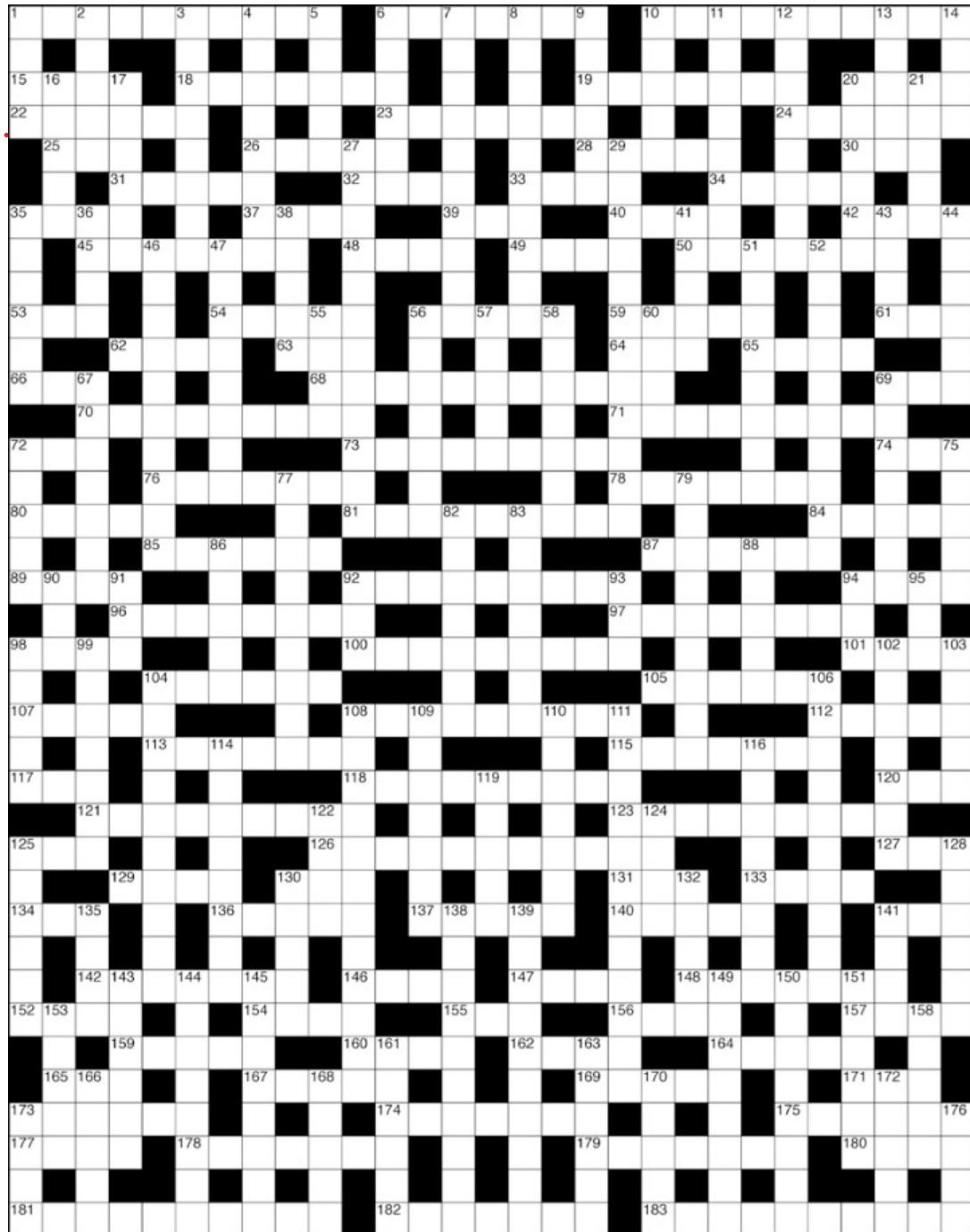
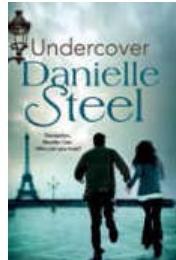
Good Morning, Mr Mandela by Zelda La Grange

The story of how one woman's beliefs, prejudices and ultimately, her life, was transformed by the greatest statesman of our time.



Undercover by Danielle Steel

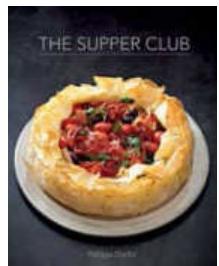
US ambassador's daughter Ariana Gregory and ex-undercover agent Marshall Everett's lives are about to collide. If they are to find freedom from their individual pasts, they're going to need to trust each other. But can they?



MegaXword No 114
© COMPILED BY LOVATT'S CROSSWORDS WWW.LOVATS.COM.AU

The Supper Club by Philippa Cheifitz

Food writer Philippa and her friends take turns to host a 4-course dinner party. This book celebrates the age-old tradition of fine dining.



How to enter

Send your completed crossword, with your name, postal or physical and email address and telephone number, to FAIRLADY MegaXword No 114, Box 7183, Roggebaai 8012 to reach us by 31 December 2015. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prize may not be converted to cash. Staff members of Penguin Random House South Africa and Media24, as well as their advertisers, PR and digital agencies and their immediate family members, may not enter. Photocopies are not allowed.

CLOSING DATE: 31 December 2015. For rules, see page 145.

ACROSS

1. Illuminates
6. Insistent
10. Movie about holidays
15. Old school, ... *mater*
18. Laud
19. Drug abusers
20. Chef
22. Less hurried
23. Muslim leader (3,4)
24. Conducts (meeting)
25. Negotiable (1,1,1)
26. Became ill
28. Glory
30. Gene acid (1,1,1)
31. Designer, Calvin ...
32. Prime
33. The m of $e=mc^2$
34. Burn (hair)
35. Out of action
37. Dotty
39. Admiration
40. Different
42. Those ones
45. Untested
48. Without sensation
49. Room entrance
50. Negative
53. Dried grass
54. Welsh dog breed
56. Wild animal
59. Govern
61. Escorted
62. Herr & ...
63. Brief lie-down
64. 007's creator, ... Fleming
65. Red-rind cheese
66. Male offspring
68. Sterilises (milk)
69. Metal rod
70. Tightrope walker
71. UK city, ... upon Tyne
72. Clasp
73. Audited
74. Tooth
76. Got up late (5,2)
78. After-dinner drink
80. Wet
81. Honestly
84. Undermine

(confidence)

85. Encrusted
87. Danger
89. Forbidden (2-2)
92. Lacking resolve (4-5)
94. Pre-Soviet emperor
96. Defunct
97. Abode
98. Curved span
100. Most gory
101. Lingerie trim
104. Kabul native
105. Restrain
107. Mexican farewell
108. Tennis coup (5,4)
112. Disagree
113. Cantonese
115. Gum infection
117. Zodiac lion
118. Pendant shapes
120. Vine, poison ...
121. NW
123. Indecorous
125. It is (poetic) ('3)
126. Domestic manager
127. Centre
129. Damage
130. Listening device
131. Cut of meat
133. Weeded
134. Ad ... decision
136. Diminish
137. Powdery
140. Hooded jacket
141. Obscured
142. Alternatively
146. Hawaiian dance
147. 0.4047 hectares
148. Estimated
152. Story
154. Pneumatic wheel
155. Light brown
156. Curse
157. Debutantes
159. Alaskan politician, ... Palin
160. Severe defeat
162. Bank vault
164. Increased
165. Geyser, ... spring
167. Fewest
169. Afoot
171. High-dependency ward (1,1,1)

173. Resumes

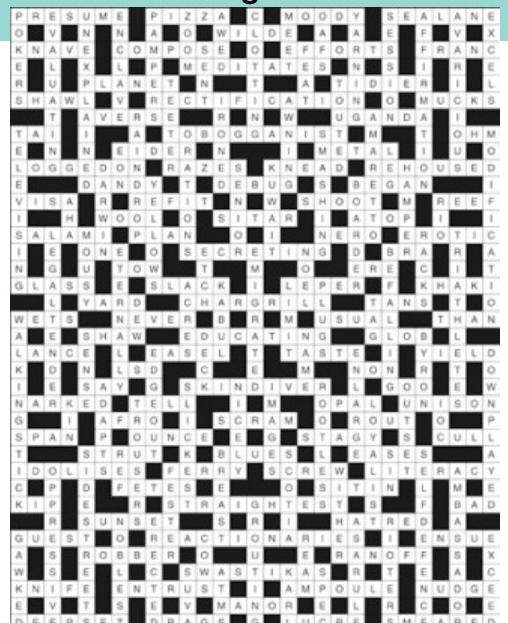
174. Touches with hand
175. Terraced
177. Writer, ... Blyton
178. Poll more than
179. Acrobat's apparatus
180. Venture
181. Unmelodiously
182. Calmed
183. Analysis

60. Carefully

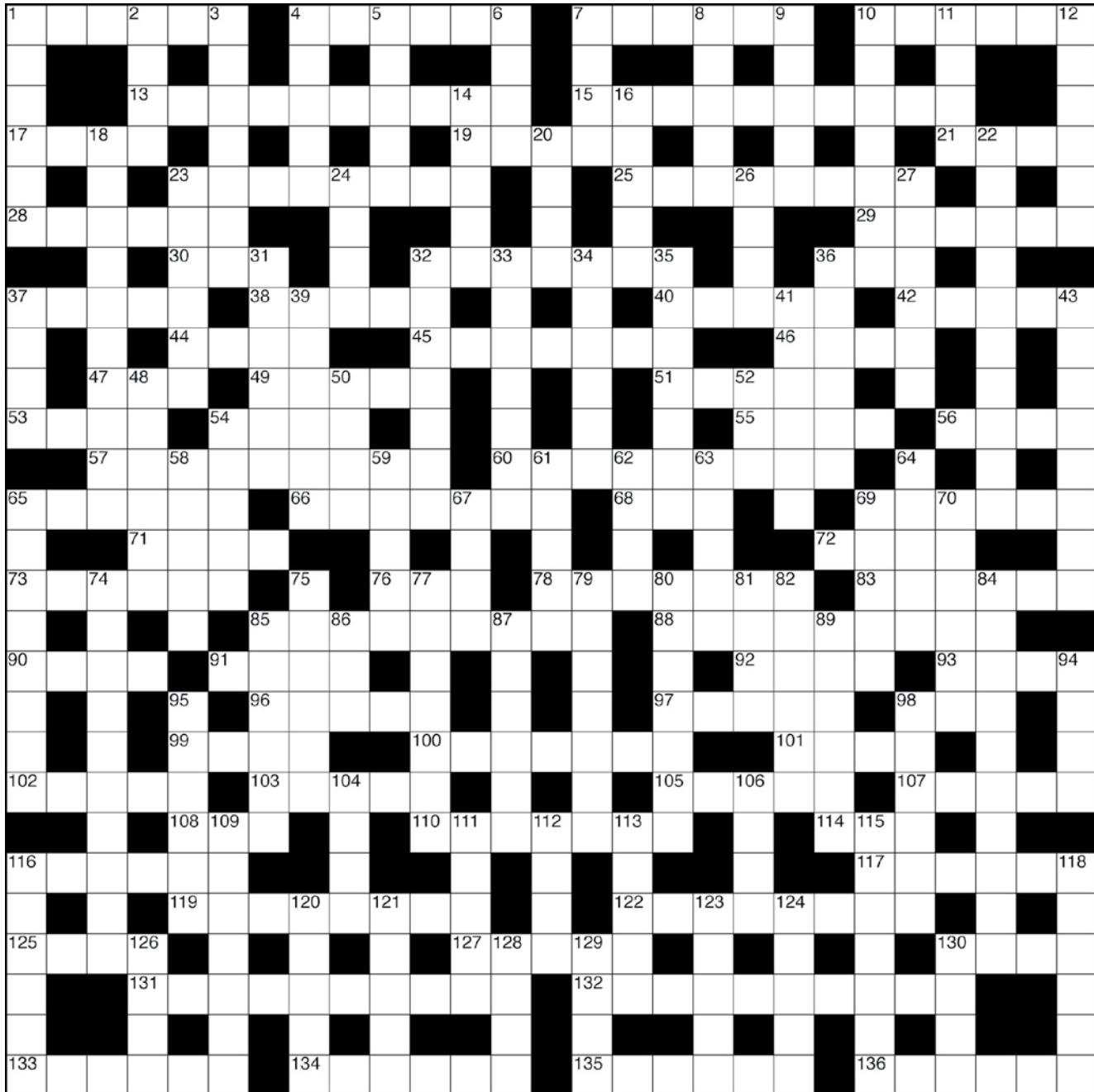
- manoeuvre
67. Annoying constantly
69. Gestures hither
72. Confine (3,2)
75. Feminist, Germaine ...
77. Crockery & cutlery
79. Soft boggy areas
82. Indeterminate
83. Children's nurses
86. Beside
88. Short-circuited
90. Paddle
91. ... & aah
92. WWW, World Wide ...
93. Early pesticide (1,1,1)
94. Israeli port, ... Aviv
95. Alphabet (1,1,1)
98. Futilely, to no ...
99. Earrings (4-3)
102. Suffering
103. Each
104. Determines
106. Bunny's chocolate gifts (6,4)
108. Informal parties (3-9)
109. Gathered
110. Non-specifically
111. Outstanding works of art
114. Cruel
116. Tinted sun visor
119. Dutch sea walls
122. Closed
124. Soprano's solo
125. Cotton top (1-5)
128. Corpses
130. Vulgar
132. Boasts
135. Loop
138. Left alone
139. Uproot
141. London's ... Park
143. Made home in tree
144. Boring
145. Track performers
149. Power-grabbers
150. Vatican City basilica (2,5'1)
151. Whirled
153. Grey
158. Sadder
161. Extra people
163. Went hungry
166. French ... soup
168. Great pain
170. Little crown
172. Yearn
173. Landlord's due
176. Nimble-fingered

DOWN

1. Historical periods
2. Yellow citrus fruit
3. Cry of agreement (4,4)
4. Switch
5. Angry growl
6. Fleet of warships
7. Accessible
8. Greek mathematician
9. Appreciation
10. Kept us going, ... us over
11. Logged on to
12. Settle snugly, ... oneself
13. Lower torso
14. Large deer
16. Composer, Andrew ... Webber
17. Roused
20. Military trainees
21. Declaim
27. Freeing from slavery
29. Easy to operate (4-8)
35. ..., feet, yards
36. TV's *Elementary* actress, ... Liu
38. Embellish
41. Glossy fabric
43. Shoe part
44. In the distance
46. Brutal activists
47. Prepare for hatching
51. Worship
52. Retook (escapee)
55. Spaces
56. Intrudes (5,2)
57. Insult
58. Scottish plant

Solution to MegaXword No 112

Brainteaser



Brainteaser No 113
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WIN ONE OF 6 NANOSKIN HAMPERS WORTH R500 EACH!

With today's hectic lifestyle – busy mornings, hours spent in traffic and long days at the office – who has the time and energy to protect their skin from the ravages of modern living, you might ask. With this in mind, Nanoskin's team of scientists formulated the easy, safe, and highly effective Indulge Nanoskin Care Range for the whole family. Now every woman, man and child can have perfectly healthy, glowing skin with a smooth complexion in record time! Available from online store <http://nanoskin.co.za/> and selected salons and spas.

How to enter

Send your completed crossword, with your name, postal or physical and email addresses as well as telephone number to FAIRLADY Brainteaser No 113 Box 7183, Roggebaai 8012 to reach us by 31 December 2015. The editor's decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into. Prize may not be converted to cash. Staff members of Nanoskin Technology and Media24, their advertisers, PR and digital agencies and their immediate family members, may not enter. Photocopies are not allowed. **CLOSING DATE:** 31 December 2015. For rules, turn to page 145.

ACROSS

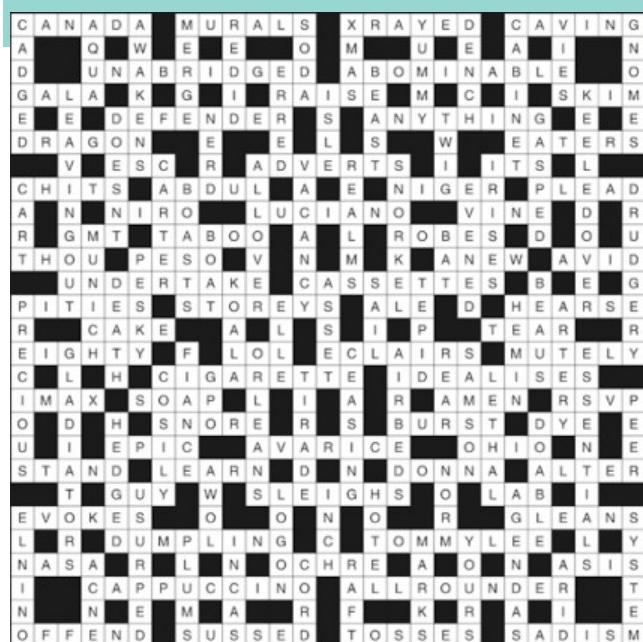
1. Often ill
4. Red/yellow mix
7. Apprentice
10. Shredder
13. Farcical kids' plays
15. Valet
17. Utah's ... Lake City
19. Doing words
21. Decorates (cake)
23. Sports boundary
25. Investment income
28. Gun or sword
29. Grounds (electrical circuit)
30. Club's yearly meeting (1,1,1)
32. Cooked in vapour
36. Compact discs (1,2)
37. Streamlined
38. Unfasten
40. Arrive at
42. Copy outline of
44. Currency of Ireland & Germany
45. Blood disorder
46. Heat smog
47. Jar top
49. Skinflint
51. Up to now (2,3)
53. Hive insects
54. Hurry

55. Poker stake
56. Vegetable, ... bean
57. King or queen
60. Besmirches
65. Portugal's capital
66. Tore (stocking)
68. Hotshot
69. Edges
71. States further
72. Feeling
73. Office workers
76. Evita, ... Peron
78. Billboard ads
83. Armadas
85. Ad-lib
88. Unfaithful spouse
90. Detergent foam
91. Rope tangle
92. Hawaiian garlands
93. Fruit skin
96. Appoint to board (2-3)
97. Shoe fabric
98. JFK's brother, ... Kennedy
99. Narrow incision
100. Phenomenal
101. Snatch
102. Indian feline
103. Unspecified item
105. River bank
107. Deposes
108. Grow old

110. Paris boulevard, Champs ...
114. Judo level
116. Crumb
117. Fable
119. Purgative
122. Cysts
125. Pop artist, ... Warhol
127. Angry
130. Molecule particle
131. Bad luck
132. Forest apes (5-5)
133. Rots
134. Chilled
135. Supplementary building
136. Yelped

DOWN

1. Playground toy
2. Conserved
3. Pulling
4. Atmosphere layer
5. Defence excuse
6. Otherwise
7. Deaden
8. Magnified section
9. Typo
10. Turfed
11. ... *spumante*
12. Obtains (funds)
14. Episode
16. Apart (from)
18. Without commander
20. Republic, Costa ...
22. Dozing
23. Drenched
24. Jaunty rhythm
26. Actress, ... Thompson
27. Sweet & savoury
31. Mutter
32. Very hot
33. Come forth
34. Associate
35. Radical
36. Hit parade tables
37. Snooty person
39. Squeaks and rattles
41. Couturier, Coco ...
43. Wide areas
48. Map pressure line
50. Front of calf
52. Mi, ..., soh
54. Violently tears
58. Strong colourless liquor
59. Pluckier
61. Take on
62. Negative votes
63. Stitched
64. Blackball
65. Excludes (5,3)
67. Unit of weight
69. Climbing plants
70. Hold in high estimation
74. Threatened (of species)
75. Silky
77. Electrical potential
79. Upshot
80. Fringed cords
81. Reign
82. Snow vehicle
84. Shimmering
85. Stir up
86. Please turn over (1,1,1)
87. Solely
89. Terraced
94. Pigments
95. Holy Land nation
98. Steaks (1-5)
104. Is not (3'1)
106. Contended
109. Tumblers
111. Long sleep (3-2)
112. Fiji's administrative centre
113. Piece of glowing coal
115. Previously
116. Groaned
118. Faded
120. Cool & distant
121. Lead-in
123. Singer, ... Lennox
124. Tennis score
126. Global hostel chain (1,1,1,1)
128. Riding strap
129. Garment worn in ancient Rome
130. Urgently (1,1,1,1)

Solution to Brainteaser No 111

Solution to No 113 will be in the February 2016 issue

The winners of MegaXword No 111 and Brainteaser No 110 appear on page 145.

Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. You can't change the digits already provided in the grid. Each puzzle has just one correct solution. Find it on page 144.

HARD

		5						
		3		1	9	4		
9	8	1						
4		1			6			
3				2				
1			5		3			
		9	8	6				
3	6	5	2					
			1					

3			9	1				
1			5	6	7			
7	9				2			
9		3			5			
5		4	9					
4			6		2			
8				7	1			
1	4	8			6			
2		6			4			

MEDIUM

9			6	7	8			
5			3			9		
	3	4						
			7			2		
7		8	6		3			
9			5					
			4	3				
8			1		6			
6	2	7			4			

7	1	3			6			
5			8		1			
	7		4	3				
8					1			
	2		3					
2				7				
	5	4	9					
9	3				2			
1			2	9	6			

3			9	1				
9	6				1	8		
3	6	4			8			
	5	9						
1	7		2			9	5	
			7	3				
	1			5	3	7		
5	3		9		2			
	7							



your STARS

SAGITTARIUS

22 NOV – 21 DEC

Change is always exciting – especially when it supports your Grand Plan. But don't expect everyone else to be as excited as you are about having the carpet ripped out from under their feet. In fact, if you're wise, you'll have some comforting pillows on hand for the less adventurous to land on. Not that you should stop, by any means. Just be aware. And take note, too, of the team on your side – lovers, and the big cheeses at work. Say thanks, and let them in. Try not to say anything unspeakable. Make it your Christmas present to them all.

PISCES

19 FEB – 20 MARCH

Just before Christmas, the money trees will shower their fruit on your happy little head. There could be a pay rise or a prize. You might even be named for some fabulous award. So instead of worrying about how you're going to pay for all the Christmas presents, focus your attention on the rest of your life. Which is going particularly well. This is the month to sample paradise – happy in the knowledge that there's more to come. Lots more. Be grateful. For everything.

GEMINI

21 MAY – 20 JUNE

Yet again, you've branched out into the fast lane and left all the competitors spluttering in your wake. Only snag is, potential backers and clients have been left along with them. Slow down. Very few people are as far-sighted and innovative as you are. Most folk need clear explanations and believable figures to work with. Even so, look to your friends for support. Astonishing as it may seem, there are many people who understand and value your contribution.

VIRGO

23 AUG – 22 SEPT

If there's anything boring and repetitive to be completed, do it before the 6th. After that, the office could burst into flames for all you care. So plan to use most of the month for brainstorming and self-improvement. None of which is nearly as ghastly as it sounds: your mind is demanding stimulation and new input, and what better way to use it? There should be some travel too. Which will be fun. Obviously.

CAPRICORN

22 DEC – 19 JAN

Those stodgy ideas are being laughed at – and you're being forced to revise your thoughts, particularly after Christmas. Not a bad thing. The fires of competition and passion have been lit and let's face it, you're much more creative when you're thinking on your feet. Still, if you can keep the focus off winning and on experimenting, you could easily invent a cure for cancer. Or a revolutionary mascara. Best option – delegate and share. It's time to unearth the real you.

ARIES

21 MARCH – 19 APRIL

It's all change at this station. So put your insecurities away and get ready for a brand new you. And the even better news is that you don't have to do a thing about it – except sit back and admire an array of fabulous new cosmic offers. And personally? Notice how your confidence and self-esteem are growing – how happy you are to let others have their way. For once. This is not – as you have discovered – the time for power struggles. No need. You'll get exactly what you want without lifting a finger.

CANCER

21 JUNE – 22 JULY

Yes, the folks around you may seem a trifle insensitive. Don't take it personally. This has much less to do with you than with the cosmic weather. So patch up your little heart and prepare to learn from those who can think, act, and get moving – irrespective of emotional drama. Powerful people are ready to help you. Opportunities are beating down the door. And yes, the love life is delicate and the finances mildly dodgy. But these things can be fixed. Concentrate on what's under your nose.

LIBRA

23 SEPT – 22 OCT

Just for a moment, there, you forgot completely about your love life to concentrate on your creative gifts. And guess what? Your energy shifted, and love came pounding on your door. So now we've got love *and* success – just because you were willing to take your eye off the ball for a second. Good for you. Now it's time to capitalise on your new support system and rope in people to help with your new ideas. They'll come willingly. Just ask.

AQUARIUS

20 JAN – 18 FEB

Make the most of this month. The heavier burdens have been lifted for a while, offering a chance to regenerate and recover. By the 26th you'll be firing on all cylinders. And in the meantime, take note of the 6th, after which finances dramatically improve. Not only that: your partner or lover is on a generosity binge, and extremely keen to assist. In fact, the one teeny serious note is a reminder to close the bigger deals before Christmas. Not hard at all.

TAURUS

20 APRIL – 20 MAY

Unexpected opportunity and good fortune aid your career. Make a list of desires so the planets know where to focus their attention. Fortunately, your instincts are flourishing on their own, directing you down all the appropriate paths. Your spiritual side is calling, giving you the courage and strength to make necessary changes. The eclipse on the 26th ignites your creative energies. If babies are on your list, this is the month to make one. One tiny point: watch your poor body. It needs the occasional snooze, even if *you* don't.

LEO

23 JULY – 22 AUG

Until further notice, no idea is a bad idea. Each and every twinge of your natural brilliance must be examined and investigated before putting it aside. Because, believe it or not, that unique invention or earth-shattering marketing tool is going to come at you from a completely unexpected source. In which case, make a plan to ignore that logical controlling mind, and go with your hunches. And if you need finance, ask a family member after the 20th. They're in a generous mood. It's Christmas.

SCORPIO

23 OCT – 21 NOV

Bold and fearless, that's you. It's a month of action – and passion. If you're love-hunting, get dressed. The planets of instant attraction are orbiting. Already committed? Do something wild to re-ignite the flames. You're not in a very responsible mood. You are, however, ready for adventure, wild evenings and wicked deeds. Be ready with apologies. Work's going well, with financial improvements and job changes after the 21st. Do your best to behave – or not. ♣

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V LOGAN, DURBAN
R MARKS, RIETONDALE
A MOSTERT, LEPHALALE
N ARNDT, PRETORIA

GIVEAWAYS SNOWFLAKE

C PALMER, LONEHILL
L MEYER, SASOLBURG
R STEVENS, DESPATCH
U LOVE, STRANDFONTEIN
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E NESBITT, WALKERVILLE
D SUTTIE, MONDEOR
C JOFFE, RANDBURG
L KEKANA, THERESA

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MEGAXWORD 111

M BAARD, RHODES GIFT
M STEYN, KNYSNA
M CADEM, NATURNA
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BRAINTEASER 110

W LOMBARD, CAPE GATE
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G VAN DER BERGH,
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S BUCKAS, VERULAM
U BORWMAN,
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SOLUTIONS TO *Sudoku*

HARD

6	1	3	5	4	9	2	7	8
8	5	2	7	3	6	1	9	4
7	9	4	8	1	2	6	3	5
4	2	8	1	7	3	9	5	6
5	3	6	9	8	4	7	2	1
1	7	9	2	6	5	4	8	3
2	4	1	3	9	8	5	6	7
3	6	5	4	2	7	8	1	9
9	8	7	6	5	1	3	4	2

MEDIUM

5	3	2	7	6	9	4	8	1
4	1	8	2	3	5	6	9	7
6	7	9	4	8	1	3	2	5
7	1	3	4	8	9	6	2	5
4	3	6	7	9	1	8	5	2
5	7	1	8	2	6	9	3	4
9	8	2	3	4	5	7	1	6
1	2	7	6	5	4	3	9	8
8	4	5	9	1	3	2	6	7

4	7	1	5	3	2	8	9	6
3	5	2	6	9	8	4	1	7
9	8	6	7	1	4	3	5	2
5	6	8	9	4	7	2	3	1
6	7	9	2	8	3	6	4	5
7	1	9	2	8	3	6	4	5
2	4	3	1	5	6	7	8	9
8	2	5	4	6	9	1	7	3
6	9	4	3	7	1	5	2	8

8	5	1	7	9	4	2	6	3
7	9	2	6	5	3	4	1	8
3	6	4	2	1	8	7	5	9
3	6	4	2	1	8	7	5	9
4	8	5	9	3	1	6	7	2
1	7	3	4	2	6	8	9	5
6	2	9	5	8	7	3	4	1
2	1	7	3	4	5	9	8	6
4	9	8	1	6	2	5	3	7



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2. The judges' decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
3. Prizes are not transferable and may not be converted into cash.
4. Please supply your residential address if possible.
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6. The competition is open to readers in South Africa only.
7. Any incidental costs are not included in the prize.
8. The closing date is 31 December 2015 and no late entries will be accepted.
9. By completing any details or providing these details you give us permission to communicate with you via these channels.
10. Delivery of prizes takes 6 weeks after notification.

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FAIRLADY EDITORIAL TEAM

Editorial Head Office: ABSA Centre, 4 Adderley Street, Cape Town, 8001
Postal address: Box 1802, Cape Town, 8000
Tel (021) 408 3898 Fax (021) 408 3959

EDITOR Suzy Brokensha
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ADVERTISING SALES

General Manager – Media24 Advertising Craig Nicholson Craig.Nicholson@media24.com
Head of Sales – Business Development Yvonne Shaff 082 903 5641; Yvonne.Shaff@imedia24.com
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DIGITAL MEDIA SALES

The Space Station (www.thespacestation.co.za)
info@spacemail.co.za
(021) 468 8299 (CPT)

FAIRLADY MARKETING TEAM

Brand Manager Roxanne Cloete (021) 408 3815
Roxanne.Cloete@imedia24.com
Marketing Assistant Naquita Hendricks (021) 408 3848
Naquita.Hendricks@imedia24.com

FAIRLADY PUBLISHING TEAM

Publisher Marianne Erasmus
Finance Manager Jameelah Conway
General Enquiries (CPT) Anita Grindlay-Whieldon (021) 408 1278
General Enquiries (JHB) Sylvia Kgatla (011) 713 9868

CIRCULATION SALES & SOLUTIONS

Head of Circulation Gadjia Gamieldien
Circulation Manager Adele Minnaar (011) 713 9440

MEDIA24 CORPORATE

CEO: Media24 Esmaré Weideman
General Manager Lifestyle Charlene Beukes
CFO: Magazines Raj Lalbahadur
Published by Media24, Naspers Centre, 40 Heerengracht, Cape Town, 8001
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party politics

'We all need to party like it's 1996, however crowded, loud and sweaty it might be.'

IN 2015, as a party-goer, it's difficult to work out what the hottest and most current attitude towards 'partying' is.

Before, say, 1997, it was simple: everyone loved parties. Everyone. All parties were great. Back in 1127 AD, if someone went, 'After the harvest, do you want to drink a load of cider and fall into a hedge?', you'd be like, 'Yes! Totally!'

Fast-forward to 1996, and if someone said, 'Do you want to celebrate England being in the semi-finals of Euro '96 – by drinking some of the newly invented alcoholic lemonade?', you'd be like, 'Again, yes – totally!'

'Party' just meant, simply, 'Not working, and therefore having a brilliant time.' Parties were conceived as a conglomeration of all the best things: jelly, alcohol, watching your nanna dance, wearing sparkly clothes, staying up late, shouting a lot and falling in hedges. Everyone was up for a party.

That is, until around 1997, when a powerful countercultural force suddenly came along – one that seemed 'better' and more modern, and like the kind of thing Chandler from *Friends* would do. And it was: not enjoying parties. Being down on partying. Trying to end partying. People wore more black and listened to Radiohead and started saying things like:

'I don't like feeling pressurised into enjoying myself,' or, 'I always pray a party will be cancelled at the last minute. Suddenly having a free evening is like a gift from God!'

However, after two decades of this 'I'm not a party person' asshattery, I feel I must, now, reveal to you these people's big secret.

Because when they say 'I don't really "do" parties,' what they really mean is, 'I don't, specifically, do

your party. At least three people I find intolerable are going, and I want to sit on the sofa in my pants watching *Grand Designs*, and doing a shot every time Kevin McCloud looks worried about a delayed consignment of triple-glazed patio doors from Germany. Your party = no.'

But are there parties these people who 'don't do parties' would actually 'do'? Hell yeah. Millions. Let's face it – if George Clooney invited them over to his house, where Jennifer Lawrence had already tweeted she was intending to restage *The Hunger Games*, drunk, using only kitchen implements, they'd be off to that party in a shot. They'd go to

one of Kate Moss's parties. Or Prince Harry's. Or a party in a castle with a ghost in it. They'd party in the Tardis, or the White House, or at the Vatican, if they got an invitation – just to see what it's like. As would every 'not really a party person' on Earth.

Because when people say, 'I'm not really into parties,' what they mean is, 'I'm just not into rubbish parties. Which, sadly and frankly, my absence indicates I believe yours to be.'

Of course, I realise what I have done here: dropped an atomic truth-bomb at the worst time possible – the Christmas party season. I have forced millions into reluctantly RSVP-ing. I have blown the cover of a thousand disco-shy sourpusses.

But I have done this for a reason. Indeed, a noble reason. For the reason all parties before 1997 were great was because everyone went – apart from Jay Gatsby, obviously, but he was, at least, in the next room.

However, since the innovation of people "not being into" partying, we've lost an important socialising demographic: 'slightly more reserved and sulky people'. We've lost all the introverts, whisperers, snobs and curmudgeons.

This has had devastating consequences – not only for the general balance and ambience of parties, but also for the ability of cheerful, party-loving people to meet, fall in love with and then marry sulky people – a sobering thought for anyone who

enjoyed the plot of *Pride and Prejudice*. Why can none of your single female friends find a partner? Because Mr Darcy has deployed the modern

'I'm not a party

person' excuse, and is in bed watching the *Breaking Bad* box set.

So this is why I'd like to echo the cries of my brethren in the trade union movement, and shout, 'ONE OUT – ALL OUT.' If ONE person is going to a party, then we, Britain, must ALL go to that party – together, again, at last, however crowded, loud and sweaty it might be. Introverts must be forced under mistletoe by extroverts. Sulkers must be barracked into knocking back three gins and dressing up as an angry elf. If there's no space inside, smoke on the porch, with 300 others.

Yes, there will be more fighting, and tears, and arguments, when we bring these reluctant people back into the world of partying. But in a good way. That's what parties used to be like. It made them more exciting. Have you seen *Abigail's Party*, or *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* There's some parties everyone was talking about the next day. I rest my case. ♣

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